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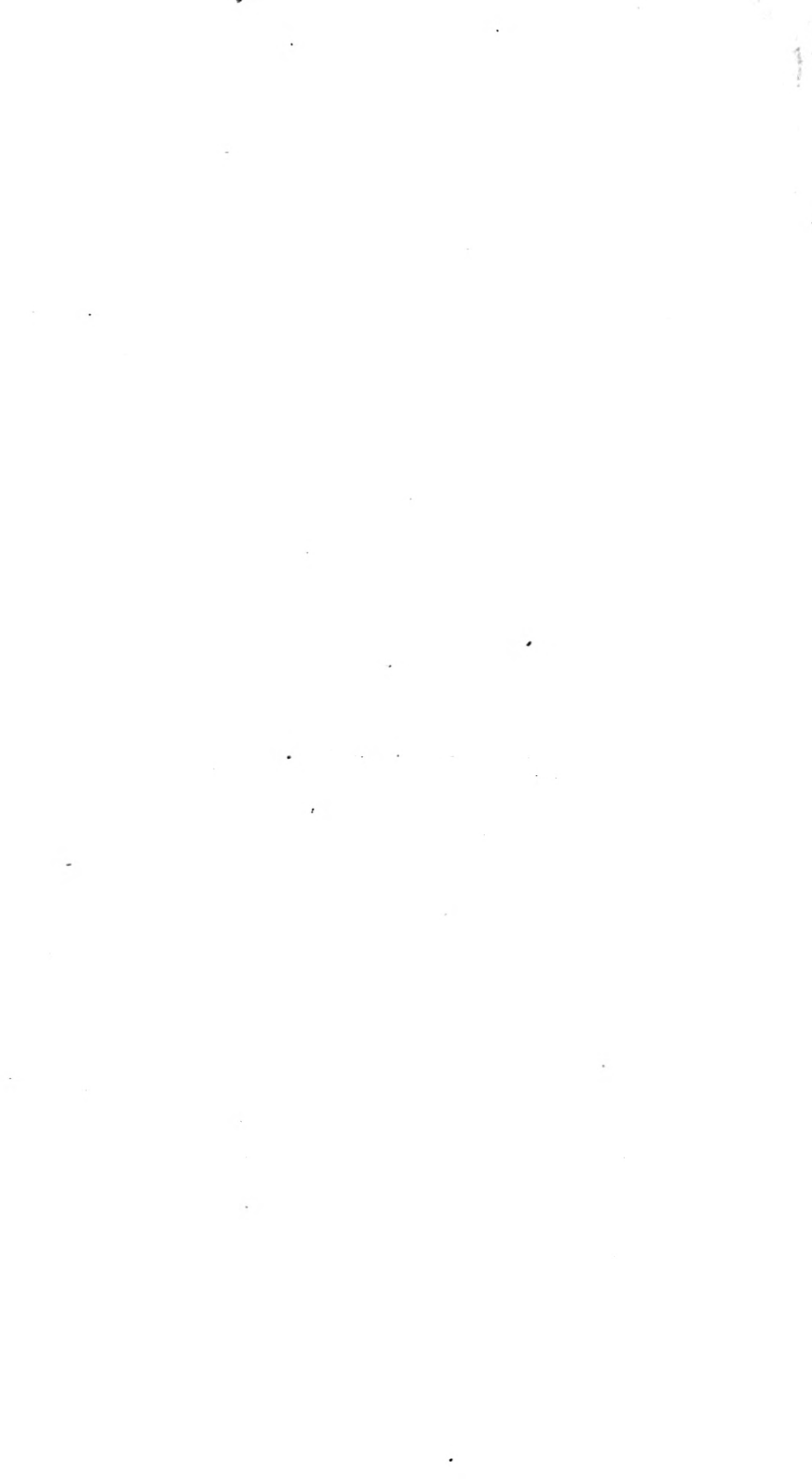
HIGH LIFE.



VOL. I.



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BEAUFORD:

OR, A

PICTURE

OF

HIGH LIFE.

BY HENRY CARD, M.A.

OF PEMBROKE COLLEGE, OXFORD.

His years but young, but his experience old,
His head unmellow'd, but his judgment ripe,
And, in a word, (for far behind his worth
Come all the praises that I now bestow,)
He is complete in feature, and in mind
With all good grace to grace a gentleman.

SHAKESPEARE.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

LONDON:

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1811.



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TO

HENRY DAVID ERSKINE, ESQ.

MY DEAR SIR,

YOU may remember the conversation which passed between us last autumn on Novel-writing, when I hinted to you my intention of employing my pen in a work of moral fiction; and how much we both lamented, that those leading minds which guide the taste of a Nation, had not invented some general name, that would prevent us from any longer confounding productions, which

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which afford rational pleasure, even to the wiser and better part of the world, with the nauseous trash, daily issuing from the press to mislead the ignorant, and to seduce the fanciful. For, until such a desirable distinction be adopted, the prejudices against novel-reading must be allowed to bear a near resemblance to reason. But, should I venture, consistently with the spirit of this remark, to style my performance a *philosophical romance*, the very name, I am afraid, would deter a numerous class of persons from opening the book, while on the other hand, the critic might think that such a title was compatible only with the graver forms of composition. If, however, the contents of these Volumes obtain the approbation of one, who is not less distinguished by
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the hereditary genius of his family, than by his own taste and good judgment, I shall not be much disturbed by receiving the appellation of a *Novel-writer*.

Allow me, then, to inscribe the following sheets to your name, as it is a most sensible pleasure to me to have this opportunity of publicly assuring you, with what sentiments of real esteem and respect,

I remain,

My dear Sir, .

Your most obliged,

And most obedient Servant,

HENRY CARD,

Chapel Hill, near Margate.

October, 1811.

BEAUFORD, &c.

CHAPTER I.

Indications of future Excellence.

THAT there are ruling passions, which, though they produce no great acts of villany, and hurry us into no atrocious crimes, yet make the draught of life sweet or bitter by imperceptible distillations, is one of those positions, which will be readily admitted by every accurate observer of human life. Nor will it be less disputed, that our curiosity may be equally aroused, and our sympathy excited in the strongest degree, for characters which only inspire us with sentiments of

love and approbation, as for those, which awaken in us impressions of the deepest awe and veneration. Whoever, therefore, shall open this volume, in the expectation of finding any of those enormous misdeeds which spring from great revenge, or diabolical hatred, exposed under all their aspects of progress and maturity, will be completely disappointed. And it is but fair, likewise, to advise that sort of Readers, whose admiration is only to be seized, and affections caught by the exhibition of perfect characters, to overlook these pages; since in them will be found no persons absolutely good or bad: none which can be recognized unlike ourselves. Let not those therefore who prefer viewing such fantastic representations as have no archetypes in nature to the eventful life of a young man of genius and virtue, sit down to peruse the story of Beauford.

The father of the subject of this narrative was an officer, who lost his life in one of those unwholesome stations abroad, where courage is unavailing, and enterprize impracticable.

Deprived

Deprived of the husband of her choice, to whom her whole soul was devoted, Mrs. Beauford soon sunk into that dry silent despair, from which the skill of her physicians, and the assiduous tenderness of a few particular friends, could afford her no relief. Finding her dissolution rapidly approaching, she addressed a letter to her brother, in which she recommended, in the most pathetic terms, her children to his care and protection, and gently breathed out her last, a few months after the fatal intelligence of Captain Beauford's death had been received.

There were few characters, perhaps, which furnished better materials for an eulogium than Mr. Colebrooke, the brother of Mrs. Beauford. His father had held a lucrative post under government; but being a jovial companion, and much addicted to dissipation, never thought of husbanding his pecuniary resources for the sake of his son and daughter. The former was now entering into his forty-third year, and his love of celibacy had neither soured his temper, nor affected him with any

of those odd humours or inveterate prejudices so incidental to bachelors of a certain period of life. He had received a classical education, and his early years were passed in qualifying himself for the study of the law. But, having unexpectedly been left a considerable annuity by a distant relation, he determined to indulge his inclination of visiting the Continent. There he remained for several years; dividing his time between the gay world, and that kind of society which contributed to enlarge his understanding, while it improved his taste. Those who figure to themselves the character of a philosopher, would paint him with some of the features which may be justly ascribed to the character of Mr. Colebrooke; an ardent desire of knowledge, together with those habits of reflection which suffered nothing to escape its vigilance; no extraordinary respect for the authority of great names, an indisposition to those inquiries which turn off attention from life to nature; an unbending firmness upon important occasions, but an inaptitude to bustle in trifling matters.

ters, with a benevolent and independent spirit.

The alarming state of his sister's health had determined him to leave his favourite retreat which he styled the hermitage, a small gothic structure in the most beautiful part of Cheshire, with the hopes of prevailing upon her to make a short excursion to Montpelier; but a violent fit of the gout prevented his design. He had just recovered from his attack, when he received her letter. Struck to the heart at its contents, he travelled night and day till he had reached the place where she expired. He had the melancholy satisfaction of arriving in time to pay the last solemn duties of respect to her memory, and of bringing her sorrowing children to the Hermitage. For they were then old enough to feel, although they could not fully appreciate the loss of an affectionate mother; Charles being in his twelfth, and Louisa in the tenth year of her age. The happiness of our infant days has been celebrated by poets of all countries; but here they may be wisely
passed

passed over for those more interesting scenes which display the ripened powers of the mind.

In his nineteenth year, Charles Beauford, to the natural advantages of a person and countenance at once engaging and handsome, a voice full and harmonious, an eye which darted rather than looked benevolence, and an uncommon share of manly sensibility, added the acquired excellencies of various and extensive learning; and an eloquence so commanding and touching, that it seemed to be the pure instinct of good taste. There was something besides so graceful and prepossessing in his manners, that they appeared to be capable of securing to him a ready passport into every society. His sister, in the bloom of seventeen, was highly fascinating, without being beautiful. Her smile alone would have given interest to the most simple language, but when united to a remarkably polished mind, few, could present attractions more powerful to a man of sentiment. Mr. Colebrooke had indeed spared no pains to render

der her a woman of intellectual acquirements as well as of accomplishments. For he did not belong to that class of reasoners who profess to think, that women should have a different and inferior education to the lords of the creation, under the belief that they do not possess equal faculties. Nor could he be made to comprehend why a female should not be able to take her share in solid useful conversation, and yet at the same time be free from pedantry, elegant in her address, and a proficient in dancing, drawing, and music. The cultivation of her mind therefore was as great an object of his attention as her improvement in the fine arts, when she accompanied him to London for the sake of her brother's obtaining the best masters in fencing and other manly exercises.

The period, however, was now come when Mr. Colebrooke deemed it proper that Charles should quit his seclusion for the University of Oxford; rightly judging, that in the society of a large college, a young man of genius and penetration may acquire
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a previous and practical knowledge of the world. But before his departure, he took him one morning into the library, and thus addressed him:—

“ My dear Charles, your approach to manhood is so near, and the success of your education has been so great, that I can feel no hesitation in speaking to you as a friend as well as an uncle. I have been condemned by many for giving you the education as it were of a prince, when you have only the fortune of a peasant. But those who have been so loud in their censures upon this act, have shown themselves but superficial judges, or else they would have concluded, that he must be allowed nine times out of ten to have formed the best opinion of a plan, who is the most interested in the event. Now if you had not early discovered that your mind was fitted for great attainments, I should never have entertained the most distant idea of bestowing upon you the education of a finished gentleman. I should have been only intent upon
fixing

fixing you in some lucrative trade. But gifted as you are, do not for one moment suppose that you will soon reach high honors and independence; since your life, from the deficiencies of rank and wealth, must necessarily be a life of adventure and agitation, before you can grasp the rewards of your genius. It is possible too, that my excessive love for you may have blinded my judgment in this particular, and led me to overrate your powers. To ascertain then that momentous fact beyond a doubt, as much as to afford you the means of procuring suitable connections for your advancement, do I send you to Christ Church. For there you may have an opportunity of measuring yourself with future ministers and patriots, and of learning from your competition with them, the place that nature has allotted you, and whether I am justified in forming such an exalted conception of your capacity and destination. As a still farther motive to stimulate, I will rather say, than to damp the efforts of a youth of your spirit and qualifications,

fications, it is incumbent upon me to inform you, that I have sustained a very heavy loss in the late failure of Mr. Calder's mercantile concern, who was one of my earliest and most tried friends in life. The large sum I had deposited there, the saving from my annuity which is all I possess in the world, is gone, I fear, never to be recovered. That sum I had destined for the support of yourself and sister, in case it should please the supreme Disposer of all things to take me suddenly from hence: for though I am not a very old man, yet as I decline into the evening of life, it is right for me to think that even this day may possibly be my last. Now that money being lost, there remains for you nothing more than the scanty pittance your poor mother, an angel now in Heaven, left you; for the little that I can hope to save under existing circumstances must become the exclusive portion of my dear Louisa. Indeed, I know so well the nobleness and generosity of your nature, that you will not rest satisfied unless your little is thrown into
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the stock for her future provision. You see therefore clearly, the urgent necessity there is of thinking nothing to be above the reach of your industry and perseverance; and under that persuasion, I am sure you will find few things to be so. Proceed then as you have begun, and let me have the ineffable joy of seeing the fruits of your education displayed in your rising greatness. One observation more, and I have done. In all your temporary follies (for my experience will not permit me to think even the wisest and most virtuous of young men to be entirely without them) never seek to extenuate them by a comparison with those of others, as that will be the certain means of plunging you into greater. But above all, never forget your God, and he will never forget you, for that will be found to be eternally true, whatever wits or atheists may chuse to say to the contrary." Here Mr. Colebrooke stopped; and tenderly pressing his nephew by the hand, hastily left the library.

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The big tear which started from Charles, when his uncle had ended his discourse, told him more powerfully than words could do, how fully sensible and grateful he was for the deep interest he took in his welfare. After indulging for a few moments in reflections, partly melancholy and partly pleasing, upon what might be his future destination, he sought his sister, to communicate the unwelcome tidings of their speedy separation, for never were brother and sister more fondly attached to each other. Her natural good sense however, which had foreseen this event, and the assurance of his constant correspondence, served in a great degree to mitigate the misery she felt at the idea of their parting; and she soon taught herself to view it in the agreeable light of a preparatory step to his future eminence.

CHAP. II.



Hail, Oxford hail! of all that's good and great,
Of all that's fair, the guardian and the seat;
Nurse of each brave pursuit, each generous aim,
By truth exalted to the throne of fame.
Like Greece in science and in liberty,
As Athens learn'd, as Lacedemon free.

WARTON.



A FEW mornings after Mr. Colebrooke had given such sage advice to his nephew, he received a letter from the Reverend Mr. Aimworth, of Christ Church College, which expressed a wish that Charles should meet him without delay in London, and thence accompany him to Oxford. Mr. Colebrooke had first formed an acquaintance with this gentleman

gentleman at Spa; the gay companionable idleness of that place soon introduced them to each other, and the congeniality of their tastes and principles led to a sincere friendship for each other, which was however rather maintained by epistolary correspondence, than by personal intercourse. Mr. Aimworth, indeed, was one of those men whom you could not intimately know, without loving and respecting. He possessed great learning with very strong powers of understanding; while none was more irreproachably correct in every relation of life, or evinced upon all occasions a more manly independence, or distinguished amiableness of disposition and behaviour. As a tutor too, he had few equals in the arts of teaching; for in his lectures were united the seemingly opposite endowments of the academician, and the man of the world. To make his young auditors wiser and better, he well knew could not be done without putting them in some degree on a level with himself, after he had finished his instructions. Instead therefore of assum-

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ing that stately repulsive air, which chills inquiry, however it may excite veneration, he never failed to throw out artfully in common conversation the substance of what he had delivered in his elbow chair; and to give it in so gay a form, as oftentimes to be able to transfuse into the driest subjects a considerable portion of attractive novelty.

To the summons then of such a character, Mr. Colebrooke paid immediate attention; and the next morning, after the arrival of his letter, saw Charles far advanced on his road to that centre of vice and virtue, the metropolis. He reached Mr. Aimworth's lodgings just as he had sat down to breakfast. The unaffected graceful manner in which Charles introduced himself, at once shewed his tutor, that with respect to the exterior, the uncle's delineation of his nephew was perfectly just; nor did many days elapse, before he was satisfied that he had not erred in the view of his mental endowments. Pleased with the polite welcome of Mr. Aimworth, gratified by the high sentiments of respect which he
testified

testified for his uncle's character, and encouraged by his familiar and animated conversation, Beauford soon felt the laudable desire of exhibiting the rich and varied stores of his natural and acquired knowledge. Accustomed by Mr. Colebrooke to deliver himself upon the most trifling subjects in a clear and unembarrassed diction, the unusually energetic tone and style which he employed in matters worthy of his attention, could not pass unnoticed by so sagacious a judge of rising genius as Mr. Aimworth, who connected with it the future practical virtues of a vigorous and enterprising spirit. The short time therefore that the tutor and his pupil spent together in London, contributed to their mutual satisfaction; nor was this growing partiality at all diminished by their unreserved communications in their road to Oxford.

It was late in a summer evening when they entered that famous seat of learning. The silvery orb of the moon was reflected from the meandering Isis, and just helped to give them
them

kind, except that of his tutor's, he did not wish for; and therefore, until his lively emotions of surprise and gratification had subsided, Mr. Aimworth left him in some degree to himself. Yet ever anxious to foster preeminent talents, he took care to speak of him in such terms, as would be certain of giving him immediate consideration with his future associates. Among those who testified an uncommon eagerness to be known to him, in consequence of the high panegyric which Mr. Aimworth had bestowed upon his genius and accomplishments, were three young men of the first-rate fortunes and families, but of very opposite characters and pursuits.

In the prime of youth, Lord Pensington's head was stuffed full of sentiment. The writings of Rousseau, Sterne, Zimmerman, and Lavater were the darling objects of his studies, and to which every useful acquisition was made to bend. An excursion into Tuscany, the Attica of Italy, in the long vacation, had transformed Sir Harry Cleveland into

into a connoisseur of painting and sculpture, although, like many other smatterers in the arts, he affected to believe nothing on this side of the Alps to be worthy of his notice. The lives of Plutarch had made his cousin, the Honourable Mr. Cropton, a prodigious admirer of antient republicanism; while a greater despot to his inferiors and servants, could not be well imagined.

Now when Mr. Aimworth mentioned to them, that he had brought a young man to Christ Church, whose mind was of the first order, such immoderate fondness had these conceited sprigs of quality for their own taste and opinions, and so completely did they shut themselves within the narrow inclosures of their own prejudices, in spite of all the endeavours of their tutor to convince them they were false and erroneous, that Lord Pensington could not suppose it possible for the true marks of superior intellect to dwell in any one who could read Zimmerman and the rest of the sentimental tribe, without enjoying the luxurious feast of tears. No more than Sir Harry

Cleveland could, without breaking into raptures, when speaking of Raphael, Titian, and Michael Angelo, and of depreciating the productions of living genius; or Mr. Crompton could, without being enthusiastically enamoured of the story of Timoleon and Brutus.

A weekly convivial meeting was held by these young men and a few more, to which Beauford's company was very politely requested by Lord Pensington; for it happened to be the night on which they were used to assemble at his rooms. The invitation was of course accepted by him; and he entered his Lordship's apartments just as the party was going to supper, to all of whom he was individually introduced by the young Peer, in a very flattering, but rather affected manner. He had not been seated five minutes, before a hasty glance round the room led him to suspect the predominant passion of its noble owner. For over the chimney-piece hung a fine print of Zimmerman, and opposite to it was placed a spirited bust of Lava-
ter.

ter. In another part of the room was a large drawing of Yorick, wandering in search of the tombs of Amandus and Amanda, while its companion presented a view of Ermonville, and the sun setting upon Rousseau's grave; and between the windows were two large Æolian harps.

The conversation at first was general; till Cropton, who sat near the windows, which were thrown up for the sake of coolness, being exceedingly *fidgeted* by the murmuring tones of the Æolian harps, which now and then came across his ear, called out to his Lordship rather peevishly, since the rattle of marrow-bones and cleavers was the only music which he could relish;—"Why Pen," the familiar way in which he usually addressed him, "will not one morning gun do, but you must have two to wake you out of a comfortable sleep. Pray let these whining instruments be removed, or else I shall become as great an hypochondriac as yourself."

Here Lord Pensington was about to describe the delightful species of melancholy
this

this music never failed to throw him into, and also how powerfully it acted, in various ways, on all sentimental geniuses, when Sir Harry Cleveland, in whom impatience to talk upon his favourite subject was visibly betrayed, abruptly stopped his Lordship by saying, that he concluded none of them, by their silence, gave credit to the afflicting report of the French having stripped Italy of her finest pictures and works of sculpture, to adorn their beloved Paris ; but that he could assure them the execrable report was true.

“ Well, and suppose it is,” replied Cropton, who delighted in every opportunity to provoke him, “ I think that when a nation is sunk into such degeneracy as to make no attempts to protect itself, our grief need not be very excessive for its fall.”

Sir Harry, though inwardly nettled at this remark, took no notice of it, but went on, heaping upon the French every abusive epithet which his memory could supply, and like many others, who, when transported by violent rage, let slip assertions which exceed
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the bounds of truth; concluded his furious invective against the French, by declaring that they had done that which was unparalleled in any age or country. "Here's a fuss about a nation of singers and fiddlers," muttered Cropton, "when it is perhaps the greatest blessing that can befall them, to be overrun by men who so idolize the heroes of Plutarch."

Charles, who had hitherto sat silent, and was amusing himself in reading the countenances of his new companions, and in forming conjectures of their sense and folly, hereupon observed to the Baronet, "that he perfectly coincided in his opinion, of its being the most cruel and irreparable of all despoliations to rob a country like Italy, which has been for so many centuries the university of Europe, of her finest remains of ancient, and choicest specimens of modern art." "But," added Charles, without attending to the air of self-importance which Sir Harry assumed, when he had uttered this sentence, and the triumphant

triumphant look he gave to Cropton, "I must beg leave to say, setting aside all question of their right to remove them, that they are but servile imitators of the Romans; for when you affirmed their conduct to be unexampled in this instance, it surely must have escaped your memory, how completely they plundered Greece of her most beautiful productions of art. Does not Cicero, in his Fourth Accusation against Verres, tell us, that there was not a single statue or figure, either of bronze, marble, or ivory, not a picture or piece of tapestry, not a gem or a precious stone, not even a gold or silver utensil of the workmanship of Corinth or Delos, which he had not sought for during his government in Sicily, and brought away with him, if it met his approbation? And as to the removal of this immense collection to Paris, you will of course grant that to be a fortunate circumstance for the professors of painting and sculpture in our country; insomuch as it is a great deal nearer than Rome, and therefore will

will sooner enable living genius to produce specimens of excellence, worthy of the ancient masterpieces of art."

"Oh, Sir," quickly replied the mortified Baronet, while he surveyed Charles with a contemptuous look, "if you are an admirer of modern efforts, (laying a great emphasis upon those last words), I have nothing more to say upon the subject."

"Why," promptly retorted Charles, who felt something like rising indignation at the manner in which he rolled his big eyes upon him, "I am not one of those, and hope never shall be, who cannot find merit in a statue or a picture, unless the one is mutilated, and the other in rags. Nor am I such an enthusiast in the works of Raphael, Titian, or Michael Angelo, as to forget that even they were tyros, before they became accomplished masters in their art."

In all likelihood the conversation would have ended here. But Lord Pensington, who never missed any opportunity of lugging in something about his prime favourite Zimmerman,

man,

man, and not much relishing the plebeian insolence which he thought appeared in Beauford's last reply to Sir Harry, cried out while casting an affected glance upon the picture of Zimmerman,—“ Oh! thou prince of sentimentalists, how exactly did thy prophetic eye foresee the bloody robberies of the Gallic wolves.”

“ Confound it,” whispered Cropton to Charles, who sat next to him, “ Now Pen has got upon Zimmerman, I shall certainly be seized with a fit of *ennui*, for he is like the woman in the play, who never knew how to have done talking of her bald filly, when once she had mentioned it.”

And true enough it was, as he said; for during one half hour, his Lordship heaped the most extravagant praises upon his favourite, till he was at last so carried away by his ridiculous feelings, as even to ask Beauford, if he did not think that he ought to have had divine honours paid to his memory, as a philosopher, a moralist, and a philanthropist.

“ To

“To that last character,” said Charles, for he was ignorant in the art of pleasing this young nobleman, by suppressing the honest dictates of his judgment, “I shall not dispute his claims; but the man who can associate the name of Rousseau with that of our great Bacon, as he has in his treatise on Solitude, and regarded their writings, in common, as devoted to the instruction and happiness of mankind, cannot with propriety, in my humble opinion, be called a true philosopher.”

“Upon honor,” exclaimed his Lordship, half breathless with astonishment, “the most extraordinary assertion I have heard for this twelvemonth past. And you really believe too, that Rousseau’s pen was not uniformly favourable to the cause of virtue.”

“Certainly not, my Lord, when I have Rousseau himself to tell me, that the woman who read a single page of Heloise was undone.”

How long his Lordship would have continued to maintain that Zimmerman was the
greatest

greatest of geniuses, and Jean Jacques the most virtuous of men, it would be difficult to determine. But, luckily for Charles, before Lord Pensington had time to pour forth any more rhapsodical nonsense, his near neighbour Cropton gave such repeated nasal proofs of having dropt into a heavy slumber, as to throw all, but the noble host, into a loud burst of laughter. This unexpected incident broke up at once the argument, as well as the company. And Charles retired to bed, fully persuaded of the truth of what before he had always doubted, that some are to be found, who hold their absurdities with so strong a hand, that they never can be wrested from them by any force of argument.

The next morning, as Beauford was sauntering round Christ Church meadow, he was met by Cropton, who laughingly said to him, in allusion to his last night's somnolence, as they pursued their walk together, " I cannot account for it, but whenever Pen begins to talk of Zimmerman, so
sure

sure am I to yawn and gape, and to feel all those drowsy symptoms, ascribed by Cleveland to the influence of a *sirocco wind*, so much dreaded, you know, by the Neapolitan lover, that he takes especial care to keep out of the sight of his mistress during its continuance."

There was an apparent frankness and occasional pleasantry about this young man, very agreeable to Charles ; and as all that he saw of his heart seemed fair and worthy, notwithstanding his crude admiration of republicanism, their growing intimacy might have ripened into friendship, if a trifling circumstance had not occurred, which gave him so bad an impression of his general character, that he determined ever afterwards to treat him upon no other footing than that of a common acquaintance. As Charles had one morning finished a sett at tennis, his favourite exercise, he asked a lad who was near him, the marker being out of the way, to bring his cap and gown. Upon his return with them, and looking more attentively

tively at his face, which was half concealed by a large bandage on one side of it, he recognized him to be Mr. Cropton's favourite servant.

"Why how, Frank, did you get that bruised head?" kindly inquired Charles.

"You shall hear, Sir; and by gosh," said the lad, "he who gave it me shall well pay for it, or else I was born in England for nothing. You know, Sir, that my master was obliged to keep his room a week ago, with bad eyes. Well then, as I was always reckoned a dab at reading from a boy, being early put into letters by our parish clerk, and was used, whenever Mr. Cropton was ill, to read him to sleep: he bade me, last Wednesday, I shan't forget the day in a hurry, take the book, which always is upon the table, and read the life of one *Crackeye*. When I came to that part, where he proposes to make an equal sharing of the lands among the people, my master clapped his hands together and cried out, 'Oh! thou first of philanthropists!' and this hard word he repeated so often,

often, that ecod, Sir, I imagined the pain in his eyes was driving him mad; and I was just thinking of bringing the doctor to him, when he became somewhat pacified. Still, however, he went on talking to himself about this fellow, till I heard him at last say, 'What a real patriot, how I envy such a man!' and then he desired me to read that part again about him; which, when I had done, he said *excellent—excellent*. Now, Sir, I believed, when I found master had not suddenly lost his senses, that he was abusing this *Crackeye* for being such a fool to wish for a law, that would make no rich and poor; which, as I take it, must always be the case. For, I could not think him so crazy-headed, although he is so queerish at times, as to like the fellow for what he wanted to do. But when to my big wonder, I found that he thought him to be a develish clever man, now then, said I to myself, is the nick of time to ask him for a bit of land for poor father and mother, for he has a huge deal of
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it in Staffordshire. Upon which I downright put the question to him. When, would you believe it, Sir, without saying one word, he jumped up from the sofa, dashed all the medicine bottles at me, and, with an elbow chair, felled me to the ground, with this large cut in my temple; and I durst say, if he had not stumbled upon me, and hurt his own head, which gave me an opportunity of running away, he would have been the death of me."

Thoroughly shocked and disgusted with such a brutality of conduct to a servant, whom he had often heard Mr. Cropton commend for his fidelity and attachment, Charles hastily slipped a crown into the lad's hand, and left the court immediately. Such, thought he, as he slowly measured his steps towards his College, his mind full of the the story of the ill-used Frank, is the arbitrary domestic behaviour of these zealots for public liberty. How strongly do they remind me of those religionists, who cannot
bear

bear with patience or meekness, the slightest contradiction and disappointment, and yet believe, that they are deficient in none of the duties which a Christian owes to his fellow-creatures.

CHAP. III.



*Invidia Siculi non invenere Tyranni
Tormentum majus—*

JUVENAL.



AMONG the pupils of Mr. Aimworth, there was one of the name of Warpdale, who had sprung from a very humble race, but whose estates were immense. In the sixth year of his age he lost his father, originally a clothier in Yorkshire; but who, from a long series of uninterrupted successes, and strict habits of parsimony, died one of the greatest landholders in that county. Being an only son, and left under the sole direction of an ignorant mother, whose darling he had ever been, the
most

most distant appearance of restraint or severity was carefully avoided in his education. And if he had not discovered an early taste for reading, there would have been a fair prospect of his passing through life as a thorough blockhead ; since his domestic tutor was too intent upon getting a fat living from his mother, by complying with all her notions, to think of punishing him when he deserved ; or, indeed, of discharging conscientiously any other duty of that respectable office. Indulged, therefore, without controul, in every humour and caprice, even his passion for reading produced none of those beneficial effects which they would have done under the hands of a skilful and vigilant master. For whenever a title pleased his eye, his tutor did not dare to prevent his snatching the volume from the shelf and reading it. From such vague and miscellaneous reading, of course, nothing could be expected, but a confused mass of truth and error : while the disposition of Warpdale, naturally violent and domineering, was rendered still more so by the pecu-

larity of his situation. For constantly residing with his mother, he saw none but those over whom he had almost an unlimited power ; and, therefore, none whose character he so much respected, or whose censures dreaded, as to make him assume a sufficient command of himself.

To this spoiled youth, Mr. Aimworth had paid uncommon attention ; duly reflecting how much power his great wealth would give him of doing good or harm, by the right or wrong direction of his mind and principles. Instead, therefore, of his vague and multifarious reading, he substituted a regular and scientific mode of study ; while he sought to correct the fiery ebullitions of his temper, into which he was occasionally hurried even before him, by good-humoured raillery, or serious remonstrances. By such methods, the mind and disposition of Warpdale were in a likely way of being greatly improved, when an unlucky step taken by Mr. Aimworth destroyed all that he had with such assiduous patience laboured to rear. Think-
ing

ing nothing more wanting to make the man completely different from the boy, than a proper model of an accomplished gentleman, he one day took an opportunity of setting Charles before his eyes, as a standard of that character, and earnestly exhorted him to conform himself to it in almost every particular. Could Mr. Aimworth have read the heart of Warpdale, when he recommended that person as the object of his emulation, he would have seen it sicken, as it were, at his very name. For a number of little circumstances, unknown to Mr. Aimworth, had conspired to render Beauford almost hateful to his sight.

Impatient of contradiction, yet fond of talking, though very apt, from his violent and over-bearing temper, to be led into unpleasant wrangling, Warpdale once or twice in that convivial meeting, of which he was a member, had tried his strength with Charles in an argument; but the promptitude of thought, and the rapid flow of well-conceived
matter,

matter, which he met with in his adversary, soon made him feel his weakness. This defeat was very mortifying to his pride; in somuch, that though he did not attempt again to compare his scanty stock with the large treasures of the other, yet he always evinced a lurking eagerness to give him a hit, when he thought that he could quietly escape. But it was not in conversational discussion alone that Beauford was his superior. In every trial of bodily skill he came off the conqueror. All this galled Warpdale beyond conception; especially too, as those who disliked him for his self-sufficiency, *hauteur*, and irritability, took their revenge in perpetually hinting to him, that he was but a cypher in company when Beauford was present, and of proposing before him those sorts of unequal matches with the former, at tennis and fencing, which plainly indicated their decided sense of his inferiority.

Stung to the quick by a treatment which he could not ward off, and certainly had not expected,

expected, for hitherto his self-conceit had never been disturbed by any such attack from his equals, he endeavoured to regain his peace of mind, by shunning entirely the society of Beauford. Still, however, anguish and perturbation, the effects of that envy with which he was so completely devoured, could not be wholly shaken off by that expedient. It often happened, in Mr. Aimworth's lectures, that a problem which Warpdale could not solve, an objection which he could not refute, or a sophistry which he could not expose, was referred to Charles, who was uniformly happy in his solutions; on which occasions, that truly excellent man bestowed upon him that kind of praise and attention, which superior wealth or rank, unless accompanied by superior attention, never could obtain from him. All these circumstances, light as they may appear to them in whose breasts the black demon of envy never found entrance, kept Warpdale in such a restless and incessant solicitude, as scarcely any remedy, except the one which
he

he had not the magnanimity to adopt, could effectually pacify.

About this time an incident occurred, which ought to have thoroughly convinced Warpdale of the folly and wickedness of envying one who had given him no intentional provocation, and likewise have impressed him with the propriety of feeling for Charles the most unalterable love and gratitude. This, however, only served to render him still more the slave of the vilest and most detestable of all human passions. One morning, the feverish state of his mind had driven Warpdale from his bed at an earlier hour than usual; and being fond of rowing, he took a skiff with the intention of amusing himself for half an hour in that exercise. He had not, however, proceeded far down the Isis, when he got entangled in some matted reeds, in endeavouring to extricate himself from which, he upset the skiff. His strength was nearly exhausted, when, by the merest accident, the beauty of the morning had brought Beauford to the very spot where he was struggling in
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the water. In an instant, for the least delay Charles saw would be fatal, he fearlessly plunged in, being an expert swimmer, and caught hold of Warpdale's hair, just as he was in the act of sinking.

The shrieks of some women who saw what had happened, brought the boatmen to their assistance, and the proper restoratives being administered, Warpdale soon opened his eyes, but closed them directly again, when he saw Charles standing before him in the person of his deliverer. The conflict of emotions which agitated the soul of this young man, at that moment, can be much better conceived than described. But as Charles attributed his fainting to excessive debility, and not to the true cause, he ran with all imaginable speed to procure medical aid; when, upon his return, he had the satisfaction of finding him sufficiently recovered to be removed to his College.

The report of this accident soon spread like wild-fire through the University, and every tongue was loud in the praises of Beauford's

Beauford's humanity and courage. The next day, Warpdale's room was besieged by a crowd of visitors; while some of them, who were no strangers to his past behaviour to Charles, did not forget, when they took their leave, to insinuate, in terms which could not be misunderstood, the peculiar generosity of Beauford, in risking his life for one, who had been so industrious in undervaluing these accomplishments and acquirements which he saw him possessed of.

In silent agony did this mortified and self-condemned young man hear those inuendoes, which came like so many daggers to his heart. "Oh Turk," said he to his favourite Newfoundland dog, as the animal affectionately licked his hand, "what a load of vexation and misery thy master would have been saved, hadst thou been with me when the skiff upset. But now, I must be compelled to esteem the man whom I cannot love, or else be held up to the scorn and execration of every one, as a monster of ingratitude. Would that I had met my fate,
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rather than have received from the hands of Beauford, a benefit which cannot be repaid, an obligation which cannot be discharged. Oh, whither, whither is my wounded vanity carrying me! Come, let me impose upon myself a task which I have never done, since reason first dawned upon me—let me have the courage to look into myself, and behold my real character. Gracious God! what a hideous compound does it present of meanness, petulance, jealousy, and arrogance! Cursed as I am then with more imperfections and vices than the rest of my fellow-creatures, must I add to the list of them, envy? And shall I display all its turpitude and malignity against the man who has preserved this unworthy life? Fool as well as ingrate too not to perceive, that in envying him, I confess his superiority.” Such were the sentiments of remorse and repentance which obtruded themselves upon the mind of this wretched dissatisfied youth, whom many esteemed so happy on account of his great fortune, when Charles entered his
ROOM,

room, to congratulate him upon his speedy recovery.

Now, though Warpdale's former coolness could not have escaped the notice of so accurate an observer as Beauford, yet he never conceived that he entertained towards him a dislike bordering upon hatred. Still less could he imagine that a young man like him, immensely rich, handsome, and what the world calls accomplished, to whom every society was open, and whose very faults and follies were treated by so many with a degree of feminine indulgence, could possibly envy any being; much less one, whose early days must be passed in toils, and privations, and anxieties, before he could obtain distinction, or perhaps never arrive at it, after all his unwearied efforts. He therefore accosted Warpdale with that unaffected friendliness, which showed that he considered their late differences to be of the most transient nature, and arising only from a contrariety of opinion on both sides, purely accidental. There was a visible constraint, however, in
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the manner of Warpdale, when he took him by the hand, and expressed his thanks to him for his exertions, which would have struck Charles in any other person, but was ascribed in him to that awkwardness which he readily conceived to be felt upon the present occasion, by one who had been from his cradle accustomed to confer and not to receive favors. Without therefore being the least affected by it, he entered into a casual flow of conversation, which enabled Warpdale to recover his self-possession, and they separated for the first time since they had met, with an appearance of friendship on each part.

From this time his behavior to Charles was so frank and cordial, that none would have supposed that he had ever harboured in his breast any sentiments of aversion towards him. Indeed, without sacrificing the proud independence of his mind, Beauford would have succeeded in gaining the affections of this "touchy and wayward" young man, if one of those imps of mischief which
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are to be found in colleges, as well as courts, in retaliation for a reproof which upon some occasion he had justly merited from Charles, had not artfully hinted to Warpdale, that he had been ridiculed in company by his preserver, for the womanish timidity he had shown when he came to his succour in the water. Now as no character is more contemptible than that of a coward, especially in the eye of a young man, this hint so carelessly thrown out, was quite enough to set so inflammable a being as Warpdale into a perfect phrenzy. He fumed, he stamped and swore; he shed tears of mingled grief and rage, at having owed his life to Beauford, and thus being debarred of taking his away in return, without a violation of nature. His passions being all mounted up to the highest pitch of fury, he saw every thing that Charles had lately said or done through a false medium; his approbation was flattery, his moderation pity, and his attention baseness. Without therefore the possibility, once entering into his contemplation, that what
he

he had heard might be the invention of a wicked and worthless fool, did this rash-headed young man determine that his vengeance for this affront should be as dreadful as if it had been sanguinary. The better to conceal his vindictive intentions, he appeared before Charles with a countenance and behaviour expressive of nothing but the most perfect tranquillity.

A few days before this malicious lie had been whispered to the ear of Warpdale, accident had thrown into his way a book called *Wanley's Wonders*, in which some extraordinary stories are told of the terrible effects of sudden fright upon the mind. He resolved therefore to make an experiment of one of those stories upon Beauford, exulting to himself, with a savage delight, that if it proved successful, he should, without labour or danger, blast a harvest which the other so soon expected to reap; for it was well known to him, that the object which he had marked out for ruin, was then writing for a prize composition; and that Mr. Aimworth had
ventured

ventured to predict he would be the successful candidate. Again and again, therefore, Warpdale thanked his lucky stars for affording so favorable a juncture of wreaking his vengeance upon him. Accordingly he invited to his rooms three young men who sought to find their way into his heart by accommodating themselves to his caprices without repugnance, and adopting his sentiments without hesitation. Having properly wound up the bastard courage of these sycophants with a plentiful quantity of champagne, he laughingly asked them, if they did not think it would be a capital good joke to pay a nocturnal visit to some one they knew, Beauford for instance, in masquerade. Ever ready to echo his opinion, they all hailed the proposal with noisy rapture. Upon which, Warpdale produced three most hideous masks, and a rope of ladders, having taken care to provide himself in the interim with those necessary materials for accomplishing his diabolical plan; while he at the same time had the address to persuade them, that

that all the fun would consist in surrounding his bed together, and, with a frightful shriek, wakening him out of his sleep with their lighted tapers held up before the masks. Their approbation being obtained to all this, he prodigiously lamented that he could not be a spectator of the inimitable drollery of the scene, in consequence of having sprained his knee that morning in fencing, and being thus disabled from ascending the ladder.

The agents of his revenge being completely equipped for their exploit, they sallied forth to Beauford's window, in the full expectation of finding him fast locked in the arms of sleep. It however fortunately happened for the object of their intended sport, that he felt a greater inclination to borrow some hours of that night for the finishing of his Essay, as the time was fast approaching for the decision of the prizes. Alone, and just then rapt in the delicious thought of the exquisite happiness his uncle and sister would receive, if he should "bear away the palm," he was suddenly startled from this

delightful reverie, by the figure of a man slowly raising up the window, with a small lantern in his hand. His presence of mind, however did not forsake him. In a moment he put out his own candles, and darting upon his visitor, with one vigorous effort dragged him to the ground. The quickness of this unexpected action, occasioned the inebriated poltroon to roar out most lustily ;which was a sufficient signal for the two others to make a precipitate retreat.

“ Who are you, and what brought you here, so strangely accoutered,” sternly demanded Charles, while with one hand he grasped him by the collar, and with the other took up the lantern which lay at his feet.

“ Why, don't you know me in this disguise?” replied Williamson, affecting to laugh, and raising himself up from the ground.

“ And pray, Sir, to what cause am I indebted for this unusual mode of intrusion

upon my privacy?" said Charles, his eye flashing with anger.

Upon which, Williamson, who was as ready to accuse as to betray, and fearful from the looks of Beauford, that he might experience still rougher proofs of his resentment, thought it most prudent, after telling him the design of his visit, to inform him, that Warpdale was the planner of it.

"It is well," answered Charles, with a more composed tone of voice, "for you as well as myself, that I was not found in bed and asleep. For in my first surprise, I should have certainly laid you dead on the spot, under the belief that my life was about to be taken away by thieves; an act which however the law might have justified by the necessity of self-defence, would have embittered the remainder of my days. Thankful I am that I was not led to commit such a deed; yet do not suppose that I shall more quickly lose my resentment upon that account.

count. At any proper incident for merriment, it would be affectation, nay downright moroseness, not to laugh heartily; and I trust I can bear a joke as well as any of my acquaintance. But I shall never style that a piece of fun, which endangers my life at the caprice of others. You need not, however, be under the smallest apprehension of being rusticated by any complaint that I shall make to the Head of the College respecting this impertinent intrusion of yours; as I shall content myself with simply observing to you, Mr. Williamson, that if ever you again repeat the experiment of frightening me out of my senses in this way, I shall inflict upon you that chastisement which so dastardly an attempt deserves." Having said this, Beauford pointed to the door, and coolly shut it in his face.

The malignant contriver of this adventure had swallowed so many bumpers in endeavouring to drown all suspicions in his companions,

panions, of the possibility of a miscarriage in their frolic, and the consequent unpleasantness of it, that they had scarcely left him before he became so affected by the wine, that his valet put him into his bed in a state little short of insensibility. When he had slept off the fumes of intoxication, which was not till late next morning, his first inquiry was, whether Mr. Williamson had called upon him, and finding that he had not, he hastily dressed himself, eager to be told, in his unrelenting desire of revenge, the distressful condition in which they had placed the hated Beauford, since he never once doubted, that a scheme so safe and practicable could be frustrated. In turning however the corner of a cloister, which led to Williamson's rooms, in his hurry he abruptly pushed against a person, when looking up to ask his pardon, his eyes met those of the very being in the bloom of health and manly vigour, whom he had pleased himself with the horrid idea of
having

having fixed to his bed for a length of time, his memory and judgment impaired by the shock of last night's fright. Sudden surprise and conscious guilt turned Warpdale speechless and pale as ashes. The blood mounted into the face of Beauford at the recollection of his ungrateful conduct, and darting at him a look of mingled pity and contempt, without saying a single word, he passed on. Shame, rage, and anguish fixed Warpdale for some time mute and immovable on the spot. As soon as he had in some degree recovered himself, he ran or rather flew to his chamber, ordered his servant to procure immediately four post horses, and never rested till he had reached his seat in Yorkshire. The rapid motion of the journey, the over-boilings of wrath, pride, and despair, and the dreadful conviction of having accredited an infamous lie, which alternately agitated his bosom, together with the total loss of sleep and appetite, produced soon after his arrival a violent delirium,

When,

When, if base flattery had not corrupted the heart of this mistaken young man, the least reflexion would have taught him, that to have escaped a vice like that of envy, did not demand any prelucent virtues, but only to resolve upon the preservation of self-respect, and the love of humanity.

CHAP. IV.



Would'st thou, my Lord, be wise and virtuous
deemed

By all mankind, a prodigy esteemed ?
Be this thy rule ; be what men prudent call ;
Prudence, almighty prudence gives thee all.
Keep up appearances, there lies the test,
The world will give thee credit for the rest.

CHURCHILL.



A FORTNIGHT had scarcely elapsed after the departure of Warpdale, when Mr. Aimworth's prediction was accomplished ; and he had the gratification of hearing the Essay of Charles receive the most flattering testimonies of applause from as numerous and respectable an auditory as ever was assembled in the theatre of Oxford. Among the distinguished

distinguished personages who admired the acuteness of penetration, the justness of reasoning, and the splendid strokes of eloquence displayed by Charles in his performance, was earl Altamont; whose patronage was esteemed the certain road to wealth and honors, and whose praises were courted by scholars of the first eminence and erudition.

His Lordship had succeeded to the title and estates of his brother in the thirtieth year of his age; and had he continued a younger brother, the mediocrity of his talents would never have distinguished him from the vulgar mass of men. But forty thousand a year, the nomination of several boroughs, the possession of that talent in common speech, called *discretion*, and an ambition extremely active and inordinate had converted him into a minister of state. In his eager desire, however, of being some-body in the political world, nothing strikes us so strongly as the untrodden path which he took to climb the steeps of greatness. Disqualified by nature
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and a neglected education from acquiring the reputation of an orator and a debater, he affected to be so passionately addicted to rural sports, to social and convivial joys, and to all fashionable gaieties and amusements, as to have little time, and less inclination, to engage in public business. To support this appearance, he kept horses for racing, though he took no delight in that sport; he built a tennis court, though he never struck a ball; he maintained a fine pack of fox-hounds, though he rarely followed a chace; he gave the highest prices for pointers of any man in the kingdom, though he never handled a gun; he kept an open table, though he seldom did the honors of it; and he surpassed every other noble family in the county, in the frequency and splendor of his musical entertainments, though he was conscious of deriving not the smallest enjoyment from them.

While his political friends, therefore, thought him immersed in a round of dissipation and pleasures, he was indefatigable
in

in his private library, and preparing public speeches with great pains and deliberation. In delivering however his sentiments in the House, it was his great aim to set them forth as if they were the suggestions of ready genius, and a quick perception; so that though he seldom spoke, and never upon occasions where a reply was expected, yet by that contrivance, what he did say, carried with it very great weight. Still further to secure the name of a statesman, he secretly expended very considerable sums in obtaining information respecting the views of the different cabinets in Europe. By which means, it sometimes happened that he gained intelligence of important events before they had reached the ears of the ministry; when, in communicating them, he ever artfully managed to give his penetration the appearance almost of intuition. He thus was able to delude even the best judges of talents, and the acutest observers of character among his colleagues, into a thorough belief, that there were few persons who
more

more completely understood the relative interests of Europe than himself; and that if he were less a man of pleasure, the quickness of his parts, and the solidity of his judgment would render him one of the most leading members of administration.

To cajole also the world into an opinion, that he had an infinite fund of various and almost universal knowledge, he treasured up in his mind a number of anecdotes, repartees, good sayings, and humorous incidents, which with great industry he had collected from rare books; when under the appearance of careless indifference, he was anxiously watching an opportunity of introducing them at a proper time and place. He had the method also of escaping from an untenable position, and from arguments which he could not refute or invalidate, in a very peculiar way. Being rather of a corpulent habit of body, he affected to doze, when he could not reply; and continued in a sort of lethargic state, until an opening was made for him to put in a hit of retaliation.

Little

Little then did his acquaintance suspect, when they expressed their surprise at his acquisitions made in a condition of visible negligence and gaiety, what a deal of labour it cost him to obtain their praises. To create a reputation among the reading and thinking part of society, the assistance of men of letters was indispensably necessary. Accordingly, he became a Mæcenas in one sense of that word;— he gave excellent dinners to those who were supposed to direct the public taste. Upon these also he practised the same trick of lolling back in his chair, in seeming drowsiness, when the stock of his ideas was exhausted, and there was the least possible hazard of committing himself. But ever vigilant and attentive in his prudential silence, he lost no idea that was started or hint which could be useful to him; while such were the fears of this diligent collector of hints, that any valuable remark might elude him in consequence of the badness of his memory, that he never went to bed, however late his company
might

might separate, without first writing down whatever fell from their lips that could in the remotest degree be instrumental to the gratification of his reigning passion for being reckoned a great statesman.

Without having a particle of real charity in his whole composition, his name was enrolled in all public benefactions, under the notion that it would give him popularity among the subordinate classes of the community. Nor could any one be mentioned of his rank and power in the state who appeared so often as the promoter and president of patriotic institutions. He was here indeed upon his very strongest ground. He could upon such occasions make a speech without incurring the risk of being disconcerted by an unexpected objection; and having the strength of an Herculean constitution, he could swallow deep potations without producing any inebriety, while the passions of those around him were just in that fit state to be gratified exceedingly by those attentions which he knew so well how

how to time and where to apply. His civilities of this kind, (for those to whom he paid them generally, wanted nothing else of him,) rarely failed of producing the desired effect; that of rendering him a general favorite among a body of men who, by a variety of minute and circuitous channels, had a considerable influence over the minds of their fellow-subjects. More circumstances to give a person a great reputation among his contemporaries, and little or none with posterity, cannot easily be imagined.

The temper of Earl Altamont was in consequence of his domineering passion for politics, very uncertain and precarious. He was as often offended as pleased; but his hatred was always more violent and lasting than his benevolence. To his dependents, especially of that description whom death alone could remove from his control, he was a complete tyrant; indeed hardly a single trait of kindness of heart, or generous philanthropy, can be produced to be cast into the scale against the several acts of oppression,

pression, arrogance, and selfishness, they experienced from him. His notions of friendship, therefore, we may suppose were not of the most exalted kind. For he had breathed too much of the air of a court to think, that the sacred and venerable name of friendship was any thing more than mere varnish and pretext; and that self-interest was not the real spring and motive of all those actions which the world accounted to be of a pure and disinterested nature. Reasoning from this principle, all the good offices he did, were primarily for the sake of his own accommodation. It therefore never once entered into his head to bestow any peculiar marks of his beneficence where he did not expect to gather the fruits of that beneficence with a ten-fold increase. Upon which account his friendship was more offered to the rich and great, than to the wise and virtuous. There might be said indeed to be only two persons upon earth to whom his heart was susceptible of that feeling, and these were his
sister

sister and his daughter ; yet even with these he could not enjoy (so much had the habit of acting with the utmost wariness and art in every possible public circumstance and situation, gradually weakened the feelings of nature) that delicious sympathy, and that confidential ease and openness which constitute the charm and soul of family affection.

Such was a true picture of the great Earl Altamont ; upon whose person the pomp of state had thrown so strong a lustre, and whose cautious dark and crooked policy had been so far successful in blinding the judgments of men as to make all his public actions seen through that delusive medium, which, like a fog, aggrandizes every object much beyond its proper magnitude.

As his Lordship was now in his fiftieth year, and his fame, in his own estimation, was established upon a solid basis, he thought that he could safely venture to relax a little from that application which had of late been so incessant in consequence of the

death of his old and confidential Secretary, and from that mysterious course of proceeding, which enabled him not only to impose upon the multitude, but upon those who were much superior to the multitude. Another circumstance also powerfully cooperated to produce this determination. Having in the chase of popular favor found it, as we have shewn by such an untried path, his correspondence was accordingly of a very voluminous and diversified kind. His official letters formed the least part of his labours. He had to address those whose opinion of his judgment and capacity would be considerably weakened, if his letters were deficient in clearness, solidity and correctness. There were others too, who looked up to him as an oracle of wisdom, and therefore could not be answered with heedless indifference, without the danger of their faith being staggered in that particular. But now that he had lost the man who imparted method, accuracy and style to all his written productions, and whose lasting
silence

silence and gratitude he secured by places and pensions, he found himself utterly unequal to the task of maintaining a correspondence which required the pen of an accomplished scholar. Whenever therefore he sat down to write, the consciousness of his defective education, (his father being of those noblemen who thought that learning was entirely useless to those who are born to fortunes) gave rise to many disagreeable feelings and apprehensions; although he had recourse to all imaginable expedients to make his correspondents believe, that he epistolized them *currente calamo*, and never failed to remind them that his communications were strictly confidential; yet such was his suspicious temper and bad opinion of mankind in general, that he could not help fancying all his precautions would be of no use, if they thwarted the views of vanity or self-interest.

Under these several impressions, Earl Altamont had been casting his eyes around for some months past in search of a

person whom, in the character of his private secretary, he might admit to that sort of familiarity, which by *his* management would enable him to get his harsh, inelegant, and oftentimes ungrammatical diction polished and amended, without exposing his ignorance in that respect, or having his intentions seen through, or without affording any person even a distant glimpse of those manœuvres by which he had acquired such high power and distinction. But hitherto his Lordship's inquiries had been attended with no success. Indeed, it was not a little that would have satisfied him; for he wanted to find respectable birth, distinguished talents, and accomplished manners united in the person of a young man.

That however, for which he might have looked in vain for many years instead of months, mere accident now threw into his way. It happened about this period; that his Lordship was on a visit to one of his political friends in the neighbourhood of Oxford; when in a cursory conversation with
his

his host, he learnt that a young man of pre-eminent abilities had obtained the annual prize composition, which was to be recited the next day. In the doubtful hope of finding the object of his wishes realized in this young person, his Lordship proposed that they should hear this performance. Accordingly, they set off for Oxford the following morning, and just arrived in time to take their seats before Charles had begun. Now his appearance could not fail of interesting every one in his favor. His address was so striking, and his countenance was so replete with animation and mind. The expectations of the Earl were therefore much raised. But when in a clear, full, and finely modulated voice, he pronounced a discourse which exhibited such incontestible proofs of genius and learning, his Lordship could not refrain from abandoning himself to the general admiration.

Bent upon procuring the literary services of Charles at any price, for his love of money was entirely subservient to his ambition,

bition, he enquired immediately the name of his tutor, and having found it to be Mr. Aimworth, with whom he had some slight acquaintance, he took the earliest opportunity of calling upon that gentleman. Yet ever watchful, and ever attentive to the most distant consequences of every action, he first informed himself of every particular respecting the character, connections and prospects of Charles before he fully acquainted Mr. Aimworth with the object of his visit. And even then he was incapable of pursuing the end in view without assuming some disguise, or employing that artifice in conduct, which is the offspring of deceit; since so far from expressing to him the satisfaction which he secretly felt of having met with a young man possessed of all the qualifications which he had been so much in search of, he affected to tell Mr. Aimworth, that though he had no particular want for a private Secretary, he nevertheless offered Mr. Beauford that situation, solely from his love of patronizing real merit: holding out however
with

with the offer such dazzling prospects as he thought no one, whose breast was fired with an honorable ambition, could withstand.

As Mr. Aimworth was no stranger to the aspiring views of Charles, and had indeed encouraged them in every proper way, he was well assured that this proposal would be highly agreeable to his pupil; he therefore, after paying the Earl an handsome compliment on his disposition to ripen the laurels of the unfriended scholar, which he received with all the air of a man who had really deserved it, informed him, that before Mr. Beauford could finally accept his advantageous offer, he must consult his uncle, who had supplied to him the place of a parent since his infancy. The great man then departed; little doubting from what had fallen from Mr. Aimworth's lips, that his proposal would be embraced on the part of Charles with the utmost avidity and thankfulness. Before his Lordship, however, left Oxford, he addressed a short letter to Charles, in which he lamented that his
engage-

engagements prevented their having a personal interview at Oxford; — passed an high eulogium upon his talents, referred him to Mr. Ainworth for the substance of the conversation which he had held respecting him, and concluded by expressing a wish, that he would repair with all convenient speed to Beechwood Court, if his overtures were approved by him and his uncle. Two posts only had elapsed when Charles received the following letter from Mr. Colebrooke.

“ It is scarcely necessary to inform you, my dear nephew, with what heartfelt delight, I read your epistle. The contents of it have not only compensated for the severe disappointment which I sustained in not being a spectator of your late fame, but have likewise afforded me a favorable opportunity of adopting a plan which every day I feel becomes more essentially necessary. For I must at length draw aside the veil before my state of health, however the naked fact may alarm you. That *regina morborum*, the
gout,

gout, has of late paid me so many visits, that I am reduced to a condition of weakness which is excessive, and appearances are in other respects very much against me. Yet, in saying this, do not suppose that I reckon upon a speedy dissolution; on the contrary, I feel the spirit of life so strong within me, that now I am able with satisfaction to my own mind, to follow the advice of my physician, which is to repair to the south of France. I calculate upon living long enough to be a witness of your prosperity and greatness; as so unexpected an avenue to reputation has been opened to you by the patronage of Earl Altamont. I shall therefore begin my journey immediately after having left your sister at Mrs. Eaglehurst's, who, I am quite certain, will act the part of a tender mother to her during my absence. For I am inexorable to all the solicitations of Louisa to accompany me; well knowing the inconvenience and danger to which I should expose her in a country, where not only the tempest of war roars around its dominions,

but

but where the bands of society are completely loosened. An infirm old man may set himself down there for a time without the risk of being noticed or molested; but the protection I could offer to a lovely young female, under such circumstances, would be so insecure, that I should be filled with a thousand apprehensions for her personal safety. To go then alone is my irrevocable determination. And as taking leave of those to whom I am unalterably attached, is to me of all things the most distressing; you must forgive my selfishness in this instance, if I spare myself that pain; and now say to you upon paper, what I should else have said to you in person.

“ My chief pleasure in the appointment offered to you by Earl Altamont, arises from the persuasion, that it will enable you to take a nearer view of those, whose birth and employments necessarily place them at a distance from the greatest part of mankind; and therefore will the sooner pave for you a way to display to the public advantage,
those

those talents with which you have already afforded indisputable proofs of being gifted. For though it cannot be with justice affirmed, that men of humble origin, are systematically excluded from high stations in this country, yet it is undeniable, that the largest share of political power is engrossed by hereditary wealth and rank. Without an auspicious introduction therefore of this kind to public affairs, the influence you would obtain in them from mere personal talents or accomplishments, would, I suspect, be insignificant and precarious.

“ Now with regard to the plan of conduct which it is proper to pursue in your situation, the most suitable and useful piece of advice which I can possibly give you upon that head is, to aim in all your actions at what is noble and honorable, and then you will fear no humiliation, and dread no detection. If you cannot be great by acting thus, at least you will not be unhappy. I cannot myself boast of the friendship or favor of statesmen, and therefore have only known
them

them in their dress of ceremony. You will see them in their domestic privacy ; and be competent to make that accurate examination of their merit, as to determine whether high stations make great men, or superior fitness and ability are the chief recommendations to high stations.

“ I cannot conclude without reminding you of one very pleasing circumstance in your entrance into life. You have been called into the presence of the great, from a conviction of your merit, and not arrived there by artifice. You are not therefore obliged to offer the gross and fulsome flattery of a parasite ; or to be the butt and buffoon of those to whom you may wish to recommend yourself ; or to tremble at the lower tables of the great, scared with laced domestics, and sumptuous banquets. No—all that will be demanded of you, is, to pay that proper respect to those, whom the laws of the land have made noble, without suffering them at the same time, from the awe of fear or the hopes of favor, to forget that proper respect
which

which is due to your own character and understanding. Which piece of advice I entertain no doubt you will practise much better than I have expressed it. Farewell; and may that uninterrupted happiness, which is the lot of few, be bestowed upon you, is the ardent prayer of

“ Your ever affectionate friend and uncle,

“ JOHN COLLEBROOKL.”

“ P. S. I have arranged with my banker, to honor your drafts, to the amount of a thousand pounds, to meet any unforeseen wants of yourself and your sister during my absence.”

CHAP. V.



A VIEW OF A GREAT FAMILY.



As soon as Charles had perused his uncle's kind and admonitory letter, which he determined to make the guide of his future conduct, he hastened to communicate its contents to Mr. Aimworth. This truly friendly man, who felt an almost paternal affection for Charles, advised him to inform Earl Altamont, that he should have the honor of waiting upon him in the course of a few days. Which, having accordingly done, Mr. Aimworth told him, that he had made it his
business

business to ride over to a friend at Woodstock, whom he knew was well acquainted with the noble inmates of Beechwood Court; and I will now give you, added he, the result of my visit; taking it for granted, that your curiosity must be as great as it is natural, to get some previous insight into the characters of a family, with which you will continue, in all probability, for so many years. The sketch I have drawn to you before of his Lordship's character, is fully confirmed by my friend; gay and careless in his temper, and only wanting steadiness of attention, to become, from that prompt eloquence, and that acuteness with which nature has endowed him, one of the first orators, as well as statesmen, of the present day. His only daughter, Lady Emily Clairville, is a beautiful creature, but of such lofty manners, the effect of the extreme pride of high birth, as to render her an object of dislike to those who would else admire her for her personal charms, and for the cultivated understanding and refined taste, which she has derived from

an

an education, chiefly superintended by her mother, who was not only a most accomplished woman, but a great patroness of learning. But having lost this invaluable parent about three years ago, who saw, and it is probable, would have entirely annihilated that tendency to excessive pride in her daughter, it has increased rather than diminished since her death. From this description of the heiress of Beechwood Court, I am sure you will never be disposed to use any expressions towards her, beyond those of the most distant civility and politeness. With her aunt, however, Lady Meeresfield, if my friend's picture retain any resemblance to the original, you will soon converse with intimacy; for, to a great share of strong natural penetration and good sense, she unites an affability and good humour, which affords a very pleasing contrast to the *hauteur* of her niece. She was a widow, in her twenty-sixth year; but never felt any inclination to enter again the matrimonial state, as her first affections had been sacrificed to family greatness.

ness. I will now give you, from my own observation, continued Mr. Ainworth, the character of Dr. Glebmore, who has lately been appointed the domestic chaplain of his Lordship; and that I may be strictly on my guard against that prejudice, which I freely confess I entertain against him, I will rather lower than heighten the outline of the likeness. What religion requires in her ministers, I am afraid you will not easily discover in Dr. Glebmore's character; a mild and conciliating address, and a disposition to reason with unbelievers with gentleness and forbearance. In their place, however, you will be sure to find that fierce orthodoxy, which can efface a name from the list of Christianity for an offence, which perhaps has been no sooner committed than expiated by sorrow or retraction; a certain haughty sternness of manner to those whom he takes upon himself to guide and enlighten; with an intolerable arrogance to such as he can command, and a most obsequious acquiescence to the opinions of his superiors.

When Charles had returned his thanks to Mr. Aimworth for this communication, and expressed to him the deep sense of gratitude which he should ever cherish for the many proofs of kindness and friendship which he had given him, he retired to his room, and dispatched a letter to his uncle and sister, in which he gently chid the latter for concealing from him the illness of Mr. Colebrooke; telling her, she ought not to have suspected that nature had denied to him that firmness which she herself possessed. The remainder of his short stay in Oxford, was divided between preparations for his departure, and the society of those few who cordially rejoiced at his new appointment. Lord Pensington too, who was distantly related to the Altamont family, and Sir Harry and Cropton, who had some slight acquaintance with the Earl, thought proper to pay Beauford a farewell visit; but from the cool manner in which they behaved to him, he was convinced their grief would not have been very excessive,

expanse of water that, in the most free and graceful curves, wound around the finely wooded eminencies of the park. Ever an enthusiastic admirer of the beauties of nature, Charles gazed with such intense delight upon scenery so very picturesque and enchanting, that he almost forgot how soon he should come into the presence of that man, who was to have such a powerful influence in the direction of his future fortunes.

Having ascended the summit of the hill, Charles approached to a Gothic arch, which was one of the entrances into the park, and proceeded along a drive upwards of a mile in extent, in which were fine chesnuts and beech, so judiciously disposed, as to give to art all the appearance of negligent nature. At the termination of this drive, was the porter's lodge; whence Charles had a full view of the mansion, whose grand and imposing exterior, seemed well fitted to reign over the domain in which it was placed. Here the carriage stopped; and as Earl Altamont's affectation of splendor and
etiquette

etiquette pervaded even to the minutiae of his household, the porter, as he opened the gate, rang his bell, to give notice of the approach of a carriage; when two servants met Beauford at the vestibule, from which he ascended by a stately flight of steps into the hall, when another domestic then appeared, who announced his name to the groom of the chambers, by whom he was conducted through two rows of antique marble statues into a gallery enriched with columns of granite, along which he passed a suite of magnificent apartments, till at length he came into the library, where sat his Lordship, Lady Emily, her aunt, and Dr. Glebmore.

All this parade was well calculated to dazzle and overawe a vulgar mind. But the self-possession of Charles was not to be lost by any such gaudy pomp of ostentatious greatness. He therefore advanced to his Lordship with a modest firmness, indicative of a conduct that would be full of all proper respect for him, though never characterised by

by the style and deportment of a sycophant. The Earl welcomed him to Beechwood Court with all that urbanity which he could so well assume when it suited his purpose, and introduced him individually to his family. When Charles entered the room, Lady Emily was busily employed in finishing a drawing; and under the thorough persuasion that her father's new secretary was a mere plodding man of business without the least pretensions in his air or manner to grace and elegance, as my Lord had only simply informed her that he was at last suited, she scarcely raised her head to give one involuntary glance of curiosity. Description, therefore, must fall short in the attempt to convey an idea of her astonishment, when there appeared before her one of the most handsome and interesting young men she had ever seen; who had all the address which a man of quality should have, and in whose eyes, air, and tone of voice, there was as much eloquence as in the choice of his words. Her surprise, therefore, was so sudden and

so great at this rencontre, that when Charles advanced to pay his respects to her, her embarrassment increased to that degree, that her voice faltered, and she was incapable of uttering a distinct word. But so perfectly unconscious was Charles of the real cause of this behaviour, that he at once attributed it to that wretched species of pride which assumes affectation for dignity.

As this reception then exactly squared with the account he had received of her Ladyship, he was not the least disconcerted by it, but immediately turned from her with an unconcerned air, and made his bow to her aunt and the doctor. There was something so unaffectedly kind and friendly in the manner in which Lady Meeresfield bid him welcome to Beechwood Court, that the words amiable and agreeable occurred to him, when he looked at her and heard her speak. The physiognomy of Dr. Glebmore was not very prepossessing; while the stiff bend of his head, and the supercilious survey which he took of Charles, gave at once a pretty strong
proof

proof of the justness of Mr. Amworth's sketch of him.

Now that awkwardness of *mauvaise honte* which Charles might have felt in his new situation, he would have been soon relieved from by his Lordship, who, intent upon losing no time in giving his secretary a great opinion of his diversified talents, had meditated several answers to questions which he meant to put to Charles ; so that, for half an hour, he kept up a conversation without languor and without interval, in which the seeming promptitude of thought and quick conception in his Lordship, was a matter of no small admiration to Charles. These questions were just finished, when the warning-bell rang for dressing for dinner. A servant then appeared, to conduct Beauford to his apartment. As Lady Emily went out, Charles could not help saying to himself, as he contemplated her finely proportioned figure and beautiful countenance, " if the qualities of your mind were but half as captivating as your person, most certainly the impression
would

would be irresistible." When Charles was dressed, he was shown to the drawing-room, where all the family, except my Lord, had assembled. Presently afterwards he entered with a gentleman, whom he introduced by the name of Featherweight. He had lately taken his seat in Parliament, for one of the Earl's boroughs; and was what might be called a solemn coxcomb. High-born and high-bred, he was one of those little great persons, who never look upon their inferiors as fellow-creatures. Yet with all his affectation of consequence, and affectation of wisdom, for he generally spoke in short sentences, seldom smiled, and never laughed; he was contented to truckle with the most abject meanness to his Lordship, whose words and motions he watched and regarded, even upon the most indifferent occasions. He might be said, indeed, to be the shadow of a shadow. But being much admired by the ladies, for the elegant turn of his person, he secretly aspired to the hand of Lady Emily, and entertained scarcely any doubt, that his frivolous accomplishments,

supported

supported by his external advantages, might in time make that deep impression upon her heart, that *for his sake*, she would reject the first offers in the kingdom ; since to none but those he well knew, her father would deign to listen. Accordingly, he had for some months past, exerted all his powers of insinuation to ingratiate himself into the favor and affection of her Ladyship ; but hitherto he could not flatter himself, with all his self-conceit and presumption, that he had made any very considerable progress. Somebody says, that to pay your court successfully to a beautiful woman, you must not compliment her upon her personal charms, but on her mental acquirements, as one she is certain that she possesses, but being doubtful of the other, she turns a willing ear to those who are ready to assure her, that her superiority is equally manifest in that point of view. Yet even this more sagacious mode of proceeding, did not advance his suit one jot with Lady Emily. For truth permits, and justice requires us to say, that where her family pride

was

was not in question, few young women had juster ways of thinking, or more quickly penetrated into, and despised those characters, who looked upon riches and greatness with the respect and admiration, which are due only to wisdom and virtue.

Although, therefore, the attentions of Mr. Featherweight were never in any way pleasing to Lady Emily, yet during the whole time she remained at the table, it was evident to him that she received them this day with looks of greater complacency than she had ever before displayed. For angry with herself at having evinced such embarrassment upon the introduction of Beauford, and apprehensive that his vanity might be tempted to put a flattering construction upon it, she determined to treat him with a studied inattention, barely allowable even in those, who think themselves privileged to depart from the ordinary rules of politeness. When Charles then had had occasion to speak to her, which was indeed but seldom, she assumed a look of haughty absence, or else that careless unob-

servance.

servance in her answers, which was even more provoking than the most saucy contempt. Her admirer too, who endeavoured to adapt his behaviour, and every sentiment he uttered, to what he thought would please her the most, overlooked the secretary in the self-same manner; and in doing so, he imposed no restraint upon his feelings, as he belonged to that narrow-minded class of men, who take no delight in beholding talents emerging from obscurity. But the disregard of all pleasing and encouraging forms, in this mere man of fashion, did not in the least mortify Charles; and Lady Emily he considered rather as an object of pity and pardon than of resentment.

Lady Meeresfield, however, could not contemplate their conduct with the same philosophic composure. She therefore redoubled her attentions to Charles, and strove, by every means in her power, to atone for their rudeness. My Lord too, who was not a little offended with his daughter upon this account, and more so upon her receiving,
with

with such apparent satisfaction, the assiduities of Featherweight, and rightly thinking also, his own consequence was diminished by their marked neglect of Charles, resolved, contrary to his invariable practice of never seeking to render any one an object of admiration but himself, to draw him into that sort of conversation, which might teach them and the doctor, whose proud coldness also had not escaped his notice, to respect and admire the youth whom they scarcely deigned to answer. Accordingly, when the coffee was brought into the saloon, instead of having it in his private library, his usual custom, he took a chair by his sister, and imperceptibly led Beauford, who was seated near him, into the discussion of topics of ancient and modern literature ; since, from long practice, and with a view to benefit himself, his Lordship had acquired an art of introducing new ideas and varying conversation. Thus attended to, and thus called forth, the heart of Charles seemed to swell and dilate itself; every feature of his countenance, and
every

every gesture of his body, were animated; and as nature had given him the finest fancy, and the gift of expressing and painting in brilliant touches all that had struck his imagination, it was not possible for those around to hear him without interest and gratification. Lady Emily, indeed, who was endowed herself with no small share of delicacy of taste, and of moral sentiment, could not help, every now and then, stealing a look at Charles from the chess-board, to which she had sat down with Featherweight, and thinking, while she listened to his happy observations and flowing eloquence, how much worthier of rank, distinction, and preeminence he was, than the coxcomb by her side, who, because he found Charles unassuming, thought his talents could not be of the highest cast. Thus, by the conduct of Lady Emily, Charles had an opportunity of distinguishing himself, before he had been ten hours in the family, which otherwise he might have sought for in vain for ten months, and not then obtained, from the peculiar character of her father, and
from

from the impossibility, in his situation, of taking, uninvited, the leading share, however well fitted, in the conversation of the table.

The next morning, Charles, unable to sleep, from ruminating all night upon his new prospects, rose with the dawn. If his eye was delighted with the commanding scenery on his approach to the mansion, it was no less gratified with the diversified and beautiful objects around it. There were two diverging avenues before the main front of the house, into one of which Charles struck, and pursued his way until he came to a noble terrace, that afforded bird's-eye views of the gardens, temples, statues, ruins, monuments, equi-distant bridges, and other external decorations, arranged with such exquisite taste as he had never before met with in any other ornamental scene. The interior also of this residence, in every respect suitable to a prince, was exactly as we have already shown in unison with the taste of its noble owner; while there was something so very singular
and

and grand in his domestic arrangements, as the reader will not deem a digression in bringing before his notice.

The first, second, and third range of the wings, which stretched out to a great extent, were solely appropriated to sleeping rooms; to each of them was added a dressing closet into which came hot and cold water, and which was completely provided with every convenience that could be wanted, even to the minutest article. In order also to put an end to all ideas of precedence in this respect, each apartment was furnished exactly in the same manner, without any regard to difference of rank or quality. At the opposite ends of the galleries, were cold baths, and warm and vapour baths, which might be filled in ten minutes. There was likewise a spacious room, fitted up in the style of a coffee-room, where every one commanded as absolutely as if he was in his own house. Here such visitors as chose it, breakfasted at their own hour, and here were refreshments served to them at all times of the day. It was furnished

nished with chess-boards, back-gammon tables, newspapers, pamphlets, and reviews.

To this room, billiard tables opened, for games, indeed, of all sorts were permitted by his Lordship, but under the express condition that those recreations should terminate only in social amusement, for the vice of gaming he detested, and would have considered it the highest affront imaginable, if any one of his guests had presumed to indulge under his roof a passion, which is as fatal to public virtue, as to private happiness. In short, the arrangements of every kind were so admirably made, that no multiplicity of visitors and their domestics ever occasioned any confusion or disorder ; while, under an air of profusion, all things were conducted with the same œconomy and regularity as in a private family.

When Charles returned from his charming ramble, he found the Earl had risen, and been enquiring after him. Being shown to my Lord's private library, he discovered him

busily employed with his papers. "I perceive," said his Lordship, after the compliments of the day had been exchanged, and breakfast ordered, "that you are an early riser. I would advise you ever to retain that habit; since there are few men without it, whose progress I believe, is worth mentioning. For my own part, I wish I could exemplify the rule which I am now recommending for your constant observance; but constitutionally inclined to laziness, I am a very late riser in general;" which was one of those falsehoods, vulgarly termed by casuists white lies, from their innocent tendency, we suppose, and which, truth to say, this great man was not at all scrupulous in uttering.

"Your Lordship's morning dreams," politely replied Charles, "may be said, in the words of the first of Italian statesmen, to be better than many mens morning's business." An unexpected compliment which the Earl was evidently too delighted with, to reflect,

fect, that to be pleased with praises which we know to be undeserved, is a proof of the lowest species of weakness and vanity.

“ Now Beauford,” said his Lordship, as soon as the breakfast table was removed, and here the air and tone of the great man began to appear, “ it is necessary that I should briefly explain to you the nature of your appointment, and the duties belonging to it. As the station of private secretary in the house of Altamont is perfectly that of a gentleman, so, I trust, you will think your salary of five hundred a year, and two horses kept at my sole expence for your use, to be correspondently liberal. The room adjoining your bed chamber is allotted for you, as the place where you will prepare, arrange, and expedite the business of the day. And, as your talents are far above mediocrity, you need not fear that I shall misemploy them upon trifling matters. On the contrary, I shall even so far honor them, having ever delighted to encourage real merit, as to

allow you to compose my most important political papers and letters; from a firm conviction that you will never abuse this unequivocal mark of my trust and kindness. Here his Lordship, stedfastly fixing his eye upon his auditor, paused for a moment, to see whether this last declaration would produce the effect which he so earnestly desired.

How completely it did, Charles proved to him at once, by immediately answering, "There is nothing, my Lord, that I wish for more earnestly, than that I may be enabled to convince you, by my fidelity, my diligence, and my ability, of the deep sense of gratitude which I entertain for the confidence you are disposed to place in me."

"Well then," proceeded the cunning patron, "I shall expect you here every morning at twelve, to take down the heads of the different papers which I shall give you to fill up, in your best style and manner. And as the trust I am about to repose in you will

will necessarily initiate you into some secrets of the Cabinet, let this maxim sink deep into your mind;—confide in others too little rather than too much. Your employment will be laborious, but you will obtain from it a correct insight into public business of various kinds, and, in time, it may open for you a way into Parliament; for to get there, I take for granted, is the great object of your ambition. In short, if you realize the expectations I have formed of your talents, I won't say how soon I may do the honors of your parts, to use my Lord Chesterfield's expression, by introducing you into that temple of fame. I have nothing further to add, but that, after the hour of dinner, you may consider yourself, generally speaking, as perfect master of your time and actions."

Here the conversation ended by his Lordship proposing to Charles, that he should mount his horse and accompany him into the park. As they rode along, Charles expatiated

patiated on its beauties with the taste of an artist, and the skill of a connoisseur. For the beauties of nature, however, the Earl, as we have already hinted, had no great relish, the study of politics constituting his sole delight; yet as he was ever solicitous of being thought an enthusiastic admirer of them, he pretended to listen with much satisfaction to all which Charles said upon that subject.

At his return, Charles passing through the saloon, was met by Lady Emily, who gravely bowing her head, with a freezing sort of politeness said, "Good morning to you, Sir," and moved on, while her heart whispered that she would fain have retained him in conversation till her aunt was ready to walk with her.

"Well," said Charles to himself, as he entered his room, "I have often heard and read of violent prejudices conceived against persons, without any just or apparent cause of dislike, but never till this hour could I accredit
such

such accounts. Now, though I am satisfied her Ladyship's unfavourable judgment must be wrong, as it is unfounded on any cause, and therefore, philosophers would tell me, ought to afford no uneasiness, yet certainly to be the peculiar object of aversion to the daughter of my patron, is no very enviable lot. To be comfortable, therefore, under it, I must think no more of it, and if that be not possible, I must set it down as one of the mortifications incidental to my situation."

When they were at dinner, he therefore behaved in a manner, that evinced how very little her Ladyship's studied reserve to him, occupied or disturbed his thoughts; which piqued her exceedingly, as it showed that her conduct failed of interesting him in any way. And at an early hour in the evening he retired to his room, to write to his uncle, sister, and Mr. Aimworth; so that she had no further opportunity of practising a behaviour towards him, which, if Charles could have seen

seen into the real state of her mind, he would have discovered to originate from far different sensations than those of dislike or aversion.

CHAP. VI.



CHARACTERISTIC SKETCHES.



AT an early hour the next day, Charles entered upon the duties of his new employment, when, having performed the business allotted to him for that morning, he mounted his horse to visit the environs of the park. He had not proceeded far along one of its sylvan rides, when he saw the flash of a gun, and immediately afterwards heard the screams of a female, whose horse he perceived, on turning to discover from
whence

whence the flash came, had taken fright at the noise, and was so furiously rearing up, that he just got to her in time to prevent her falling to the ground. In a few moments, an elderly gentleman was by her side, who, when he was satisfied that she was more alarmed than hurt, cried out, "Oh! Doll, Doll, what's the use of the rambling accounts you are continually giving me about the Grecian and Tartar jockies; as how they could leap from one horse to another when they were on full speed, and could manage them so thoroughly as even to make them bow their bodies to the ground in the same manner as camels are now taught to kneel. What's all your theory, Doll, without practice. But I beg pardon, Sir, for not first thanking you as I ought for the piece of service you have done this girl. I am George Upgrove of Upgrove Park, a name pretty notorious in this county. And this is my daughter Doll, or, as she calls herself, Dorothy, a devilish clever
clever

clever girl I assure you, though a damned bad rider, as you see."

Here the young lady raised her head, which was reclining upon the arm of Beauford, and, slowly folding her hands together, exclaimed, in the most affected manner, "What blessed angel has kind fortune sent to my rescue. In an instant more perhaps I should have been trampled to death by that odious beast." She then stopped, and fain would have blushed upon looking at Charles, if the rouge on her cheek had permitted her to do so, when she asked to whom she was under so great an obligation.

"My name is Beauford," said Charles; "and I shall consider it as a fortunate incident in my life, that I have been able to render you this trifling piece of service."

"Call it not trifling I entreat you, Sir," replied Miss Uprove, who the more she stared at Charles's countenance, the more she admired it, "when, if it had not been

for your timely gallant interposition, I might have been stretched a corpse upon the ground." Now this last expression the lady certainly meant for a very pathetic one, but which appeared almost ludicrous to Charles, from the theatrical tone in which it was pronounced, and from the manner in which she was disposed to let her apprehensions magnify the extent of her past danger.

"Come, come Doll," rejoined the father, "you had not such a hair-breadth escape either. You talk as if you had been soused head and ears into a pond, or rolled over a precipice, instead of having gently slid off your horse into that gentleman's arms. But see, here is the cause of your and Swiftsure's fright." At this instant one of Earl Altamont's game-keepers approached with Mr. Uprove's servant, leading Swiftsure; while the former humbly begged pardon for having frightened the lady; and told them that he was prevented from seeing them, as he fired his piece off in the coppice.

This

This explanation being perfectly satisfactory to Mr. Upprove, and Charles deeming his assistance no further necessary, as Miss Upprove insisted upon walking to the house, prepared to take his leave; when the old gentleman giving him a hearty shake by the hand, said, "We shall soon see you again, as I suppose by meeting you here, that you are on a visit to my Lord."

"I am Earl Altamont's private Secretary," replied Charles, "and hope on my return to find Miss Upprove perfectly recovered from the effects of her accident." So saying, he made a low bow to her, mounted his horse, and pursued his ride.

Squire Upprove, as he was usually called, was one of those country gentlemen, who, inheriting a large estate which his ancestors had immemorially possessed, consume three parts of their existence in farming, hunting, drinking, and sleeping. He was, however, from his birth and fortune, certainly not from his capacity, made one of the legislators of his country. But though he had sat
in

in Parliament twenty years, yet he never once opened his mouth, as he had too much modesty to talk of what he did not understand. His element was a fox-chace or a race course; where he gave laws with infinite skill and ability. By his rustic neighbours he was called a very knowing man, and by his equals a very hospitable one. He was therefore admired by the former, and endured by the latter.

Miss Dorothea, or as her father to her great mortification, persisted to style her Doll or Dolly, wished to be thought as fond of the Belles Lettres, as she really was of dress, equipage, balls and compliments. But, like many other great geniuses, she grasped at more than she could embrace, she attempted more than she could execute. Having, however, a full share of that useful qualification, assurance, and plenty of puffers to assert her claims to accomplishments of all kinds, the liberal and accommodating world gave her credit for those talents which it never would have discovered, had she not
been

been the only daughter of the rich Squire Upgrove.

As the Squire walked along with his daughter, he vehemently expatiated upon the many excellent qualities of Swiftsure, and maintained that the whole stud of my Lord could not produce a more gentle and beautiful animal; while she assented to all his remarks upon this subject in a manner, that might have shown him with the smallest penetration, how fully occupied her thoughts were upon the charming stranger. Upon approaching the house, Miss Upgrove suddenly exclaimed, "See yonder, Papa, is Lady Emily and her aunt going to the Thornery;—let me hasten to join them;" when she hurried off without waiting for his reply.

This sequestered spot, which Lady Emily, termed the Thornery, from the wild scenery around it, was about half a mile from the house. The walk that led to it, wound through a plantation just thick enough to exclude surrounding objects, yet admitting a
soft

soft and chequered light, the effect of which was highly pleasing to the eye. In this favorite retreat a rustic building was erected, in which her Ladyship had her harp, drawing and painting materials, and a small cabinet containing a selection of English, French and Italian books.

The two ladies had scarcely reached this spot of perfect retirement when they were overtaken by Miss Upgrove, who as soon as she had given her hand to each, exclaimed to Lady Emily, " Oh, my dear friend, such an adventure I have met with this morning, that I shall be able to think of nothing else at least for this fortnight. Oh, the fascinating youth! But not to keep you longer in suspense, know then, Papa, who, I verily believe, if left to himself, would perform all the duties of life on horseback, determined that I should mount Swiftsure this morning instead of my barouche. We had not come far down the avenue which brings us to Beaumont, when the report of a gun occasioned my horse to plunge and rear prodigiously,

giously. A few minutes before, Papa had stopt to speak to some farming man, and the groom remained with him; so that they might have as well been in London for any assistance they could render me. While I remained then in this terrible predicament, a young man darted from the wood, as it were by a stroke of magic, and in an instant was by my side, conjuring me to throw myself into his arms. I did as he requested; for sure never did I see one whose ——” Here Miss Upprove checked herself for a moment, thinking she had said too much, but instantly returned to the subject, by desiring Lady Emily to tell her all about him.

“ I have often found,” said her Ladyship, smiling; “ your hand-writing to be as difficult to decypher as hieroglyphics; but now I think your speech is not less so; for how is it possible, that I can gratify your curiosity about a person whose name, my dear, has not yet once fell from your lips.”

“ Oh, there can be but one such interesting being,” replied Miss Upgrove “ in the whole county.”

“ And who is he pray,” asked Lady Emily.

“ Why, who else can it be,” answered Miss Upgrove, “ but your Father’s Secretary.”

Lady Emily’s face was instantly suffused with blushes; yet mustering all the woman in her, she endeavoured to conceal them by pretending to adjust a part of her dress, and hastily saying, “ Oh, I know nothing about him.—My aunt is best able to speak concerning that gentleman.” Upon which Lady Meeresfield, with more than usual animation, replied, being not a little angry with the unjust prejudice which she conceived her niece had taken against Charles, “ If you think, Miss Upgrove, that Mr. Beauford excels all whom you have seen in the graces of his countenance and person, I will venture to predict, upon further acquaintance, you will be so much delighted with his mind
and

reason, would then pronounce it unfit for the inspection of the young of both sexes."

"A name or a word," replied Lady Meeresfield, "certainly has a mighty influence over the understandings of the weak and ignorant; for whatever ideas, however ill-founded, they are originally taught to associate with that name, continue to sway them through life. In the days of my youth, for instance, a general notion prevailed, that novels were bad things for young persons. And even at this period, you will still find many who are tolerably enlightened upon other points, retaining their antipathy against novels, as tenaciously as their estates. Now such persons, if you asked them whether they ever read this or that novel, would make you the same reply as Doctor Glebmore did to me yesterday, when I asked his opinion of Doddrige's Rise and Progress of the Soul, "that he durst say the book had a vast deal of merit; but he never read dissenting books." "Let therefore a novel
be

be calculated to do ever so much good ; to instruct and embellish life, and only bear that proscribed title, it is sure to be abused by those whose prejudice against the best novels proceeds, not from having read them imperfectly, but because they have not read them at all."

" I suppose then," said Lady Emily, " to that cause it may be imputed, that so few persons of superior genius have given way to a propensity for this branch of literature, which otherwise they would not have resisted."

" Yet I have been told," said Miss Uppgrove, " that the number of novels annually published in England, is greater than in all the other countries of Europe put together."

" That I believe is the case," replied Lady Meeresfield ; " but why a well educated woman, at Paris, for example, now professes to say, that she never read one novel in her life ; and that her leisure hours are engrossed with geography, voyages, and
history,

history, is to be attributed to their having few such works as those of Richardson, Moore, Burney, and Edgeworth; writers who convey instruction with amusement, and who, perhaps, have inculcated more liberal and just ideas upon the public, than could have been supplied by an host of exhortations upon moral philosophy. Instead, however, of such publications, Paris, I understand, abounds with those pernicious works of imagination, which corrupt and debase the female mind, and render it unqualified for the real business and duties of life."

"In your praise of Moore, Burney, and Edgeworth, I readily join," said Miss Upgrove; "but I must confess, though I suppose I am uttering a sort of literary high treason, that the novels of Richardson never failed to produce in me the symptoms of heavier reading. Their perusal was more a duty than pleasure: just as I have gone through Milton's Paradise Lost, and Spenser's Fairy Queen. Richardson's good people
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are all too formal for me. In his most admired production, Sir Charles Grandison, the long speeches, or rather sermons, the bows, compliments, and unalterable composure of that personage, are what, if I met with in any novel writer of the present day, I should set down as so many specimens of absolute dulness. Then too the intolerable length and minute detail of his incidents. Why, they make me yawn as much as if I had been an actual spectator of them."

" Yet, with all his prolix descriptions and fatiguing discourses," answered Lady Meeresfield, " what novel writer has traced the human passions with more consummate skill than Richardson? Who can be called a Painter of Nature, if he cannot."

" I do not deny that he is so," rejoined Miss Uprove. " But as a great French genius said in reading his works, *La nature est bonne à imiter, mais non pas jusqu'à l'ennui.*"

" For my part," said Lady Emily, " while I admit that there is too grave and sombre a colouring

colouring in most of the virtuous characters of Richardson, that they are deficient in ease and vivacity; that many of their prejudices are ludicrous, and that he sometimes makes his most refined personages speak the language of the vulgar, yet he will ever remain one of my chief favorites. In Sir Charles Grandison, every one, I think, must acknowledge the hand of the master in unravelling all the delicate and subtle turnings of the heart, and in painting the passions. Two or three of the scenes between Clementina and Sir Charles are, in my humble opinion, unrivalled for their exquisite moral sensibility, I had almost added, and for their genuine sublimity. And though there may be too much of the *veille cour* about Sir Charles to please the present taste, yet I can't help regarding him as a model for a finished gentleman."

"Well," said Miss Upprove, "I do allow that Sir Charles does not mope me quite so much as Pamela, who, in spite of all that is said about her virtuous independence

pendence of mind, certainly married Mr. B. “*for the gilt coach and dappled Flanders mares,*” or, as Clarissa; with her odious early rising, constant orisons, and abominable quantity of needlework.”

“ Yet,” replied Lady Emily, laughing, “ notwithstanding all these formidable objections, I must prefer the novels of Richardson to any of those which belong to the German or New School, with all their shadowy apparitions, nocturnal voices, echoing footsteps, haunted castles, and long passages. When the eye aches in poring over these prodigies and terrors which are presented to us on every side, it is quite refreshing to open a volume of Richardson, where, instead of ideal beings in situations equally ideal, we meet with them placed in those circumstances which experience might justify, and real life allow.”

“ I should be sorry, indeed,” said Lady Meeresfield, “ that your taste led you to delight in any of those wonderful productions; since that hardly deserves to be called

called a good novel, which is not subservient to the purposes of truth and good morals. Now all Richardson's are; and a sufficient time has elapsed to make them seen in their proper form, unsupported by any other recommendation than what their intrinsic excellence has bestowed upon them."

While they were conversing on this subject, one of Lady Emily's footmen came to say, that Sir Christopher Martman, his Lady and daughter had alighted from their carriage, and waited to see them. "Pray, Lady Meeresfield; is it true," asked Miss Upprove, as they walked to the house, "that Sir Christopher made his great fortune as a Manchester trader."

"Exactly so," answered her Ladyship, "by that means he purchased a borough, and afterwards procured a baronetcy."

"He is monstrously diverting, I think," replied Miss Upprove, "in his ways of acting and talking. Was there ever too a more pretended despiser of aristocracy, and a more real lover of it. And yet the pride of
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of his purse makes him insolent to all those whom he thinks to be his inferiors in wealth."

"Then few," said Lady Meeresfield, "can escape it, as he is one of those people who reckon every thing poverty that is under a hundred thousand pounds."

"His affectation also of good breeding," replied Miss Uprove, "involves him in a thousand vulgarities and absurdities which he otherwise would have avoided, if he could be only content to pass for what he really is, a plain, plodding, awkward humdrum sort of man."

"And yet," said Lady Emily, "because he will give his vote which way my father chuses, we must admit him low, and low bred as he is, into our society, and treat him and his family as our equals."

"That must ever be the case," replied her aunt, "in a free and commercial country, like this."

"What think you also of his wife and daughter," said Miss Uprove. "Are not they
they

they a pair of originals? My Lady, with all the starch primness and solemn conceit of a quaker, drawling out the few words she utters with the lengthened accent of a Barbadian Creole;—and who thinks it beneath the dignity of a Baronet's Lady to move a muscle of her face upon any occasion whatsoever. Then too, Miss Margaret. O, gemini, what a contrast! I never see her enter a room but I think of the days when I used to play puss in the corner; or, hunt the whistle. So jumping, so skipping, so fluttering about is she, and so like a girl at a breaking up."

In this manner did Miss Upgrove run on, till they entered the house, where they found Sir Christopher in earnest conversation with my Lord, who was just then saying some very civil things to him, as he soon wanted his influence in the county upon a certain occasion, Lady Martman mute and immoveable, and Miss Margaret bawling out, that she would mark the game of billiards if she could, which the Squire was playing with Charles, who had not long returned from his ride.

ride. At their appearance, the conversation became general, and continued so till the visitors took their leave. Miss Upgrove, however, did not let slip the opportunity of saying to Charles at her departure, " Mr. Beauford, I hope we shall see you frequently at Upgrove Hall; when, if you should find me dull and stupid, I trust," she laughingly added, " that you will have the candor and justice to impute it to the wish of not affecting the singularity of being thought unlike any of my neighbours."

CHAP. VII.



La devotion des femmes qui commencent, á vieillir n'est souvent qu'un etat de bienséance, pour sauver la honte et la ridicule du debris de leur beauté, et se rendre toujours recommandables pour quelque chose.

ROCHEFOUCAULT.



CHARLES had now passed some weeks at Beechwood Court, and though he had frequent opportunities of seeing and conversing with Lady Emily, yet after they had exchanged the compliments of the day, they seemed, as it were by mutual compact, to observe a total silence to each other. Every succeeding day Charles thought, that she was, if possible, more cold, haughty, and reserved

served to him; and so deeply impressed was he with this notion, that he had taught himself to look upon her in the same manner as he would have contemplated a beautiful picture or statue. Accustomed to have her words, looks, and motions, eagerly watched by so many young men of rank and fashion, Lady Emily's pride was excessively mortified, that a person in Charles's situation should see her go out and come into a room, as unheeded as if she was an object of attention to no one about her. Nor could she less tolerate the idea, of being thought by Charles unable to support the dignity of her rank by her mental accomplishments, although pride and resentment equally prevented her from making any display of them before him.

These reflections, however displeasing, would not have kept her Ladyship's mind in a state of almost perpetual agitation, if she had not secretly felt that an attachment, in spite of all her efforts to resist it, was gradually gaining upon her, for an object, whose ordinary behaviour,

viour, in every circumstance towards her, showed, at least, the most perfect indifference. For, in those evening conversations, which her aunt was so fond of drawing Charles into, she would sit near them, pretending to be busily occupied in reading or drawing; and it was at those times, she thought him the best bred, the best informed, and the most engaging of men. The talent, genius, feeling, and animation which Charles occasionally displayed, while he thus freely gave himself to Lady Meeresfield, became every time more interesting to Lady Emily as they developed themselves, and as they were united with an uncommon elegance of face and person, no wonder that she could not resist the force of those impressions. Alarmed at these feelings, she endeavoured to suppress them, by the recollection of his inferior birth and situation, his total indifference to her, and the insurmountable barrier to their union, from the family pride of her father, greater, if possible, than her own;—and who would rather, she knew, see her dead, than
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the wife of his secretary! Yet, whenever she was in his company, all these considerations; earnest as she was to cherish them, were banished from her thoughts.

One morning, while her mind was thus fluctuating between her regard for, and determination to be more distant than ever to Beauford, in consequence of his increased wish, as she conceived, to shun her society, the name of Mrs. Eaglehurst was announced, and in the next moment this lady entered her boudoir. "This is an agreeable surprise, my dear madam," said Lady Emily, hastily rising and embracing her, "when my last letter found you indisposed, and resolute not to leave Cheshire, at least for some months, to see you now well, and prepared, I hope, to stay some time at Beechwood.

"After that letter," replied Mrs. Eaglehurst, "you may be well astonished at this sudden visit; but every thing you know with me, my dear, gives way to the calls of friendship. My relation Seymour, being on the point of accompanying her husband in his

diplomatic mission, and having expressed a strong wish to see me before she went, I could not refuse the summons. Being half-way then on my road to Beechwood, I thought you would take it unkind that I did not shape my course hither ; and need I add, that your Eaglehurst could not be the cause of overspreading that charming countenance with disappointment. *Apropos* of charming, though not of our sex. Your aunt tells me, that my Lord's new secretary is as handsome as he is clever.—Pray is it so?" Here Mrs. Eaglehurst rivetted her eyes upon Lady Emily, as if she would read her very soul, perceiving that she was so visibly disconcerted by this *mal-apropos* question, as to be under the necessity of turning to the window for a moment to hide her confusion ; but recovering herself in some degree, she answered in a faltering voice, conscious how much she was disguising her real sentiments, " I believe Mr. Beauford is generally thought to be handsome, but I have seen features which
are

are more pleasing to me, though separately they might not be so good."

"How long, my dear," said Mrs. Eaglehurst in that careless manner, as if she took little concern in the question, "have you become such a proficient in the art of physiognomy?"

"I did not know," replied her Ladyship, "that it required the skill of a Lavater, to make the distinction which I have just now done."

"Oh certainly not," said Mrs. Eaglehurst, "Indeed I should be sorry if you had any predilection for an art, which *sometimes* may greatly mislead us. But I am all impatience to be introduced to Mr. Beauford; for, whimsical enough to say, I have had his sister for some time under my protection, and yet have never seen him." Here Lady Emily, glad of an opportunity to show her friend that she was in no way interested about Charles, answered, "I did not know that Mr. Beauford had a sister;

but how should I indeed : for though he has been with us for some weeks, yet our conversations have never extended beyond the common incidents of the day."

"And a most fascinating creature, Miss Beauford is, I assure you," replied Mrs. Eaglehurst.

"Then I suppose," said her Ladyship, "she is very much like her brother." These words had no sooner escaped her lips, than aware of their import, she instantly added, "I meant to have said, that this is the conclusion my aunt would have directly drawn, as Mr. Beauford has already become a prodigious favorite with her."

"I am happy to hear it," replied Mrs. Eaglehurst, suppressing a smile, "as it so *clearly appears* that he cannot boast of being one of yours." This remark tended not a little to increase the embarrassment which her Ladyship yet laboured under, in consequence of what she had before uttered ; but as it did not at present suit the purposes of Mrs. Eaglehurst to offer any comment upon it, she

she continued her discourse by saying, "that the uncle of Mr. Beauford was a gentleman, for whom she entertained the highest respect, and yet it had so happened, though she had now intimately known Mr. Colebrooke for three years, insomuch that to her care he had committed his niece when he left the kingdom on account of the ill state of his health, that her visits had always been made at his house, when his nephew was pursuing his studies at Oxford. Nor did she discover till the other day, that it was her protégée's brother who had obtained the appointment of secretary to his Lordship."

"And pray where is Miss Beauford now?" inquired Lady Emily.

At this unexpected question, Mrs. Eaglehurst hesitated and coloured, but drawing her chair nearer to her Ladyship, after a short pause said, "To your ear I can whisper the most important secret, without reserve or limitation; convinced that the most implicit reliance can be placed in your discretion, know then, that the lively, the assiduous,
the

gallant, and universally agreeable Oswald, for so I am told my son is called in the most fashionable societies, (by the bye, if I could be angry with you for any thing, I should for not having yet asked after Oswald,) came to me just a few days before I had taken charge of Miss Beauford, when unfortunately mistaking his civilities and attentions for proofs of regard, she conceived a most serious passion for him. As soon as I found the poor creature ate little, sighed from morning till night, and was pining her very soul away in secret, I thought it most adviseable for her future peace of mind, to remove her at once to my cousin, Mrs. Dudley's, in Yorkshire, under the plea that a law suit obliged me to accompany my son immediately to town, where I should be under the disagreeable necessity of remaining with him some time. For, as to marrying Oswald, even if the passion had been reciprocal, to a girl of no fortune or family—Oh! the very idea is quite shocking.” “No,” added Mrs. Eaglehurst, giving at the same time a most significant look

look to her Ladyship, "I hope the time is not far distant, when the most amiable and bewitching of her sex will become more sensible of my son's attractions." These broad hints Mrs. Eaglehurst had of late been much in the habit of giving; but finding that the person for whom they were intended, never received them with a worse grace than at this moment, she wisely put an end to the conversation at once, by retiring to her own apartment, under the pretence of having letters to address to several persons.

Mrs. Eaglehurst was the widow of a cousin of Earl Altamont, who died very opportunely when his purse was quite empty, and he had no visible means of replenishing it. Fortunately however for her, a distant relation died soon after that event, and left her only son, then an infant, a handsome fortune; allotting out of it a genteel provision for the support of the mother. In her youth, Mrs. Eaglehurst had been celebrated for her beauty; but that had long disappeared. From the desire, however, of being always distin-

distin-

distinguished, when she ceased to be admired for her personal charms, she turned devotee. Now though she was no advocate for the inquisition, or dreaded popery as much as she hated it, yet certainly she was the least of a latitudinarian in her religious principles, that could well be imagined ;—for she set down every one as a heretic, who did not follow her creed, and believed them as much fated to eternal perdition, as a Mussulman does all those who deny the infallible authority of the Koran. Yet, because she was invariably seen at church twice on a Sunday, never paid or received visits on that day, now and then popped in her head upon the sick, the poor, and the aged, and occasionally quoted scripture, she passed for a pattern of piety and goodness among her neighbours and acquaintance.

But truth to say, this *pious and good* lady was a consummate hypocrite ; since she really no more valued those qualities than as they contributed to promote her secular views. For had not the show of religion especially enabled her

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her to obtain a great ascendancy over the mind of Earl Altamont, she would have cast it off as easily as she did one of her old dresses. Among that great man's peculiarities, there was one which we have not yet enumerated, his excessive apprehension of death; inso-much that every thing which reminded him he was not immortal, produced a surprising depression of spirits. To such a pitch did he carry this apprehension, that the sight of a funeral never failed to excite emotions so painful, that he could not shake them off till long after he had conceived them. Now, from a very intimate acquaintance, and a close study of his domestic character, Mrs. Eaglehurst had discovered this weakness and some others, which his Lordship had flattered himself were concealed from all human eyes. But, as it was no common benefit she had fixed her mind upon reaping from him, so, to attain it no common share of his esteem and confidence was requisite. The contempt of life and death, in circumstances of external prosperity, she well knew,
secretly

secretly obtained his highest admiration. This artful woman, therefore, affected to unite with these the most serious and deeply impressed sentiments of religion, together with the completest love of truth, justice, benevolence, and self-denial; and so well had she imposed upon my Lord in those respects, that he thought her in his heart the only real and proper object of admiration he had met with in all his life. And, as she likewise took the most favorable opportunities of artfully touching upon those parts of his public character, upon which, it was evident to her, that he chiefly delighted to hear himself praised, he entertained as high an opinion of her discernment, as he did of her merit.

Upon several domestic occasions, therefore, especially in two or three overtures which had been made for the hand of his daughter, my Lord was more influenced by the subtle manœuvres of Mrs. Eaglehurst, than by the plain good sense of his sister. To one, Mrs. Eaglehurst professed to regard his irregularities; to another, his want of
dignity;

dignity; and to a third, his violence of temper, as obstacles to the honor of becoming his Lordship's son-in-law. And as these several objections were stated with an air of the most disinterested candour, and with the assurance, that having nothing more deeply at heart than the future happiness of Lady Emily, she had not failed to make the minutest enquiries respecting the private virtues or vices of those who aspired to be so intimately allied with the house of Altamont, they were sure of producing the desired effect. By such methods, and by frequent hints to his Lordship of the tremendous uncertainty of happiness in the marriage state, if any one of the grand essentials in it were overlooked, she not only contrived to break off several suitable matches for his daughter, but even to bring him to think, contrary to his former wish of having her early wedded, that it was best, perhaps, a few years more should pass over her head, before she gave her hand to any one. But, for what did this woman forsake the broad path of truth
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and honesty, for the bye-turnings and obliquities of deception and meanness, and set at nought every honorable feeling? Why, for an object, who, could all have been directly gained which she sought for by her deep and infamous arts, would have thought she had obtained but a trifle, which was scarce worth regarding.

Mr. Oswald Eaglehurst, the peculiar and darling care of his mother ever since he came into the world, was one of those self-conceited, idle, opinionated, but good humoured sprigs of fashion, whose highest ambition it was to be thought dashing and tasteful by the ladies, and whose greatest glory it was to figure at a ball. Enamoured with his own person, which really was neither graceful nor handsome, he felt no sort of envy or jealousy, if you praised before him any of his acquaintance for their superior intellectual acquirements;—but the moment you talked in commendation of their features or shape, he became restless and uneasy, and always took care, before he
went

went, to hint, in terms not easily to be mistaken, that the general opinion in that respect was decidedly in his favour. He was so completely devoid of all political ambition, or of becoming a great man, in the common acceptation of the word, that when Earl Altamont made him an offer of a seat in Parliament, he answered, "*Bien obligé*, my Lord; but, 'pon honor, I cannot sacrifice my blooming complexion for the good of the nation. Why, if I had to attend the House, even for a short session, ten to one I should look as yellow and cadaverous as any judge or counsellor in Westminster Hall. My place in the senate may be very easily supplied, but in the beau monde, I flatter myself, the thing is not quite so easy."

Such was the inconsiderate creature who Mrs. Eaglehurst had secretly destined for the husband of Lady Emily. Little did she think to what unprofitable uses her aspiring restless duplicity for him would be converted. For, like many other scheming people, who in laying their designs, never dream that
they

they may be frustrated by the person who is fixed upon to thrive by them; so Mrs. Eaglehurst, taking it for granted that her son would believe himself at the summit of human felicity, in the possession of Lady Emily, never once thought of asking him how he was affected towards her; but heaped stratagem upon stratagem, manœuvre upon manœuvre, to keep off all pretendesr, in the hopes at last of being able to surprise her son, with the joyful news of my Lord giving a willing consent to their union. Whereas, if she could only have divested herself for a moment of that *finesse* which pervaded all her conduct, and simply asked her son, whether he should not deem himself the happiest of beings, if he could obtain the hand of Lady Emily, he would have saved her from the most humiliating and mortifying of all reflections, the remembrance of having employed her sycophant and infamous arts in vain, by telling her at once, that she was too cold, stiff, and high for him, and not for the sake of any fortune or earldom to boot,

would

would he marry one whom he did not love, and whom he could not like.

Under a very contrary persuasion, however, Mrs. Eaglehurst had methodized her plans. For, after she had taken charge of Miss Beauford, at the request, as we have intimated, of Mr. Colebrooke, whom she really did respect, since, by a singular inconsistency in her character, she could admire that integrity and virtue in others, to which she had not the courage to fashion her own conduct and behaviour, she began soon to suspect, from some expressions which fell from Oswald, that her visitor engrossed more of his thoughts and notice than she wished. To prevent Oswald, therefore, from being too deeply smitten with the charms of her young companion, whom the last and only time he saw, was as a lively girl just bursting from childhood, she lost no time in removing her to Mrs. Dudley's seat in Yorkshire. Nor had Mrs. Eaglehurst the least difficulty in effecting this separation, and
preserving,

preserving, at the same time, the friendship of her fair guest; as, aware of the delicacy and proper sense of pride in Miss Beauford, she knew she had only to hint her apprehensions of Oswald's incipient attachment for her, and she would be eager to embrace any proposal that could be suggested, for the effectual suppression of it. This then was done by Mrs. Eaglehurst; and as she expected, Miss Beauford was all impatience to be with Mrs. Dudley, whom she had met once in company, and was much pleased with her frank and agreeable manners. At parting, Mrs. Eaglehurst said a thousand affectionate things to her, and assured her, that as soon as ever her volatile son set off for town, she should lose no time in hastening to embrace her; in short, she acted her part so well, that Miss Beauford would have thought herself the most ungrateful creature in the world, could she have bid adieu, without feeling and expressing the deepest sentiments of regard for her.

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It was no wonder then, that Mrs. Eaglehurst felt the blush of shame tinge her cheek, when Lady Emily enquired where she had left Miss Beauford, conscious of the despicable trick she had played her, and of the unfavourable point of view in which she was about to place her in the eyes of her Ladyship; but being solely intent upon the advancement of her son, this treacherous woman had no sort of scrupulous anxiety whom she might hurt or degrade, so that he could in any way be benefited. Blinded, therefore, by this feeling, she thought it an opportunity too good to be neglected, of setting off Oswald to advantage with Lady Emily, by her pretended story of Miss Beauford's passionate fondness for him.

But of the real motive of Mrs Eaglehurst's visit to Beechwood, Lady Emily was not more ignorant than Miss Beauford. Having often heard Mr. Colebrooke talk of his nephew as a very fine and accomplished young man, the instant she was apprised of his entrance into Earl Altamont's family, she

questioned Miss Beauford very closely respecting her brother's character and person, who, as it may naturally be imagined, spoke in no measured praise of both; and the next day, after this conversation had happened, she put into the hands of Mrs. Eaglehurst a miniature of Charles, to convince her, that in describing his countenance, she had not there, at least, betrayed the partiality of a relative. Now when Mrs. Eaglehurst had attentively surveyed the miniature, she could not help acknowledging to herself, in spite of all her maternal fondness, that it was a countenance far more likely to make an impression upon the heart of such a woman as Lady Emily, than that of Oswald.

What then was the expedient of Mrs. Eaglehurst, to avert so unpropitious an omen of her future success? To hasten to Beechwood;—discover if the seeds of an attachment were yet sown between Lady Emily and Charles; and if they were, to prevent them ripening, by keeping alive and increasing her family pride by every possible means,
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and by seeking in that quality, and her sense of filial duty, a defence against the attractions of Charles;—and, if disappointed in that hope, to insinuate her suspicions to my Lord of their mutual passion, and thus effect the separation of the lovers. With such views, she had put her interrogatories to Lady Emily about Charles, who flattered herself that she had concealed a passion, which she was unable to check; yet Mrs. Eaglehurst had too much penetration not to be convinced, from her answers, that she must be quick in uniting the greatest vigilance with the greatest precaution, if she hoped to save the inestimable prize being carried off by other hands than those of her son.

CHAP. VIII.



TABLE TALK.



WHEN Mrs. Eaglehurst arrived, she found that Charles had left Beechwood early in the morning upon some particular business for my Lord, and did not return till the middle of the next day. Soon after he was introduced to her, she presented him a letter from his sister, which accounted for her removal in a manner, which led him to form the highest opinion of that lady's principles and character. And, as it was necessary for the ultimate object of her manœuvres to get into the confidence of Charles,

Charles,

Charles, she took all pains to render herself agreeable to him, which was no difficult task to accomplish, after his sister had painted her in such amiable colours. Before they separated then to dress for dinner, she had so far succeeded, that they were quite sociable with each other, and seemed as if they had been living together for years. One circumstance, indeed, had occurred at this meeting, which served to put Mrs. Eaglehurst in good spirits the whole day. Lady Emily had entered the room while they were conversing, and though she watched his looks at her appearance with a lynx-eyed inquisitiveness, she saw that Charles only accosted her with that easy kind of indifference, which her sage judgment determined he could not have done to any woman, who had excited in him the smallest sensation.

Now this being the day in the week when Earl Altamont, from motives of policy as well as of vanity, gave one of his ostentatious entertainments: Sir Christopher Martman, his lady and daughter, Mr. and Miss Upgrove,

grove, with Mr. Featherweight, had been invited among many others; the company, assembled, however, was not so large as usual upon this day, as several neighbouring families were prevented from being there by indisposition and other causes. In going into the dinner room, Charles had offered his hand to Mrs. Eaglehurst, when Miss Margaret, who was near him, suddenly exclaimed, "Bless me, I have dropt my beautiful cameo; pray, sir," addressing herself to Charles, "see if it lies by your feet." As Charles stooped to look down, Mrs. Eaglehurst passed on; which, when Miss Margaret perceived, she instantly said, "Oh here it is all the time entangled in my veil." At that moment, one of the footmen appeared to say the company were seated, upon which Miss Margaret giving Charles her hand, hurried on.

"I really thought," whispered Mrs. Eaglehurst to Charles in a half serious manner, when he had taken his place between her and Miss Margaret, yet loud enough to be overheard

heard by Lady Emily, who was nearly opposite to her, "that your gallantry was of that kind as not to neglect the old for the young; but upon this occasion, I believe, I must forgive you, especially as it is the first offence, and *the temptation was so very great*;" here she looked at Miss Martman. Now these last words were caught by that young lady, who conceiving them to be a compliment to her, she was more desirous than ever of engaging the attention of Charles.

Perceiving the impression which Charles had made upon her daughter, Lady Martman, who had scarcely any powers of observation but about her, wished, by a look at Sir Christopher and then at her, to check the alarming freedom of her manner to Beauford. Luckily, however, for his daughter, Sir Christopher, who at any other time would have been incensed beyond measure at her behaviour, as he was bent upon marrying her to a Lord, was then so disconcerted at a ridiculous accident that had just then happened,

pened, and which led to a very unpleasant remark of his noble host, that he had eyes or ears, at that moment, for nothing around him. If this baronet was exclusively *English* in any thing, he was so in his stomach. Plenty, therefore, he more valued in the supply of his plate than delicacy. Accordingly, when he sent the servant behind him to Mr. Featherweight for some carp, and that gentleman helped him to the head of it, he angrily told the servant, when he returned with his plate, that he had brought him a dirty one in mistake, filled with bones instead of carp. Now Mr. Featherweight was a modern *Apicius*, who picqued himself upon knowing the choicest dainties of the table, and could discourse as scientifically upon the *hors d'œuvres, entrées, entrémets* and *relevées* of a great dinner, as any of those cooks in France, who are in the habit of taking medicine to preserve the fineness of their palate, and of their sauces. When he heard, therefore, the exclamation of the baronet, and saw him send away one of the greatest of delicacies,

licacies, he was not more astonished at his want of *savoir vivre*, than the other would have been to see him eat melons with *bouillé* after the Parisian fashion. Presently afterwards, this epicure wished to taste the *casseroles du riz*, which was placed before Sir Christopher, who directly cut through the crust, and by doing so the white sauce ran plenteously over the table-cloth, to the no small surprise and annoyance of the baronet. At this, his Lordship's risible muscles were visibly excited; but when Sir Christopher, in his determination to partake of most of the good things which appeared in the three services, had one dish removed for another, and thereby completely deranged the elegance of the table, the Earl, who was too apt to boast that his cooks were artists, so far forgot his good-breeding at this unexpected proceeding of his guest, as to say to him, "I would advise you, baronet, to give the *Almanach des Gourmands* a speedy admission into your library; as then, and not till then, you will be aware of the impropriety of
discomposing

discomposing the arrangement of a regular dinner."

It was this remark which had thrown Sir Christopher into such confusion, that for half an hour afterwards he sat quite stupified with shame and mortification. During that time, Charles was amusing himself at Miss Margaret's expence with the most plausible gravity imaginable, and when she softly hinted to him not to be too particular in his attentions, lest papá or mamma should notice them, and think she was going to Gretna Green with him, he answered, "I am not the least surprised at their guarding such a treasure with the utmost vigilance." Unfortunately, however, for Charles, this compliment was partly overheard by Lady Martman, who bit her lips and frowned at her daughter so often, that at last Miss Margaret, with all her bold confidence, became so terrified at the gathering storm, that to avert it she called out to her mother, "there was no occasion for her looks, as the *young gentleman* had not said any thing yet, which ought
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in the least to alarm her." This speech came like a clap of thunder upon Charles;—the company stared at each other, and even the servants could scarce refrain from tittering; while Charles's colour rose up to his very temples, and he was so disconcerted, that he began to talk without knowing what he was saying. Lady Meeresfield felt so much for him, that she immediately entered upon some common-place subject, to divert the general attention from the awkward predicament in which he was placed. My Lord also, pitying the embarrassment of his secretary, and likewise desirous of restoring the baronet to his ease, at first proposed to him to take a glass of tokay after his ice, and then laughingly asked Mr. Upprove, how Sultan did? Upon which the squire, affecting to shake his head and look disappointed, said, "My groom tells me, I never made such a bargain since I followed a chace; for Sultan is nearly done up."

"Why yes," replied his Lordship, with
a sort

a sort of triumphant air, "I think Nimrod himself would have done as I did."

"Is it possible, my Lord, that you have sold your famous hunter Sultan?" asked Mr. Featherweight.

"Not absolutely sold him," said his Lordship,— "I have taken Uppgrove's Chance for him."

"Exactly so," rejoined the squire, "except that you forgot I am to have an hundred to boot for the exchange."

"Well remembered," said his Lordship, "desire Mr. Arable," turning to his butler, "to pay Mr. Uppgrove a hundred guineas."

"Why, my Lord," observed Mr. Featherweight, "I must consider your bargain as a bad one in every point of view, even if Sultan were quite done up, since I sold Chance to Mr. Uppgrove for sixty guineas; but pray my Lord," continued Mr. Featherweight, as he saw him redden a little at this piece of information, "may I ask how you came to turn horse-dealer?"

"Come

“Come Upgrove,” said his Lordship, “I durst say you will be obliging enough to let him into that secret, in return for the one he has just now discovered to me.”

“Oh my Lord,” replied the squire, wishing to drop the subject, “an account of a fox-chace cannot be anyways amusing to the ladies.”

“I will insure you a patient hearing from them,” said his Lordship, “provided you promise not to allude to your story again in the course of the evening.”

The squire inwardly thought there was no fear of his doing that, but finding that he could not well get excused from telling this story, thus began:—“You must know, Featherweight, that yesterday was a fine scenting day, and the fox broke cover in grand style over the downs; so that you might have covered the hounds with a sheet. But as sly reynard drew the dingle, he ran through a flock of sheep, kept the water edge along the bottom, crossed the dabble, and reached long wood. Now the sheep having
lost

lost us the scent, we drew through the dingle to no purpose; when, after this sharp run, I saw my Lord by the side of the river letting his horse drink, but as he seemed to be in one of his political reveries, I had so much the good of the nation at heart as not to interrupt him. Presently afterwards, the hounds were in full cry, which roused his Lordship, who in high spirits led us all over the greasy fallows and a long choak jade, and attempted to head us up break-cord hill; when, before we had reached half-way, Sultan compounded, and Chance was then taking the lead, upon which his Lordship cried out, ‘Stop Upprove, Sultan is blown, and I have none of my fellows near me.’ I directly offered my horse, who for blood and bone, I would match against the field. His Lordship then asked me if I would exchange horses? ‘Aye, my Lord,’ answered I, ‘with a hundred to boot.’—‘Done,’ said his Lordship, ‘dismount,’ which I no sooner did, than he was off again, before I had time to repent of my foolish good-natured bargain.”

“ Yet

“ Yet by the bye,” gravely added the squire, “ I don’t think, my Lord, that your system of riding with a slack rein over ploughed lands and steep ascents, exactly suited this time, though that notion of mine may, perhaps, be owing to my ignorance in not understanding the *mànege*; and some may also think that the horse took too much water; but be that as it may, I must make the best of a bad bargain, for bad it is, since though I only gave Featherweight sixty guineas for Chance, yet Sir George Chevy offered me one hundred and fifty for him.”

“ Yes,” said Mr. Featherweight, “ I don’t forget how you snapped me up, when I asked you only sixty guineas for Chance.”

“ I wish,” replied the squire, “ that any one would snap me up when I now offer Sultan for that sum.”

“ Done,” instantly replied Mr. Featherweight, “ the horse is mine.”

At this unexpected acceptance of his offer, the squire’s presence of mind had nearly forsaken him; but presently recollecting himself,

self, he said, "Come, come, I will not verify the old proverb, that the fool and his money are soon parted."

"The observation may be applicable," replied Mr. Featherweight, "but the horse is mine, Sir."

Here Miss Upprove, perceiving that Mr. Featherweight did not at all relish this last speech of her father's, and apprehensive that he might say something exceedingly in point, which would open his Lordship's eyes to the artful manner in which her father had obtained Sultan; in order therefore to prevent it, immediately said, "Pray Mr. Featherweight, have you seen the new comedy? I am told it is highly spoken of in our circle."

"No, I was not in town," answered Mr. Featherweight, "during its representation; but Dr. Glebmore was, and he, perhaps, will favor us with his opinion upon it."

"Me, sir," replied the Doctor, quite indignant at the supposition of going to a play, "why surely you do not mean to refer to me,
for

for any judgment about this comedy; for, sir, I must inform you, that when I assumed the sacerdotal character, from that time I ceased to frequent a theatre."

"I wish every clergyman," said Sir Christopher, "would follow your example, Doctor; for my part, I think a theatre is only a fit place for your fops and fine ladies;" here the Baronet looked rather significantly at Featherweight and Miss Upgrove.

"And yet, Doctor," answered Mr. Featherweight, "if I rightly remember, one of your order, who was afterwards a bishop, wrote two comedies, which were more remarkable for their sparkling wit, than for their unexceptionable morality."

"O, I perceive," said he, "that you, like many others, confound the father with the son in this instance, because they were both Doctors, and happened to bear the same Christian name. No, Sir;—Bishop Hoadley was not a writer of plays, although I must acknowledge that his sentiments on church authority, were far from orthodox."

"You may well say so," observed Mrs.

Eaglehurst, "of that famous champion of the low church, who, in conformity to his latitudinarian tenets tells us, that episcopacy was not essential to the church, though derived from the Apostles." I am not therefore surprised that the man who could propagate such a doctrine, was fond of plays, and supposed to be a writer of them, no more than I am, that the Doctor should be angry at Mr. Featherweight's thinking him to have been present at this new comedy; for even when moral principles are inculcated on the stage, to quote the words of a great character, "they are not such as a christian ought to cherish in his bosom, but such as must be his daily endeavour to extirpate."

"Very true, Madam," replied the Doctor, "theatrical performances are, as a father of the Church says, the blemishes of nature, the plague of reason, and the ruin of virtue."

"And yet, Doctor," said Charles, "that same father Augustin quoted Virgil as often as any one. St. Gregory Nazianzen also thought

thought it not unbecoming his sanctity to compose a tragedy upon the passion of our Lord, and St. Chrysostom is said to have slept with an Aristophanes under his pillow."

To this remark the Doctor made no reply, upon which Lady Meeresfield said, "I had always understood, that the origin of plays were religious mysteries, and surely now that they are purified from the superstition of former and grossness of latter ages, the stage has some pretensions to be called the school of morals and of delicacy."

"Why, certainly, my Lady," replied Dr. Glebmore, "in comparison to the times, when your sex were obliged to wear masks at a play, the stage may with propriety be denominated the vehicle of morality; but still I must think that those of my cloth ought not to be seen within the walls of a theatre."

"And those who are, Doctor," observed Mrs. Eaglehurst, "ought, in my opinion, to find as much difficulty in gaining admittance

into episcopal houses, as the *divorcées* in France did into good society."

"Come, come, cousin Eaglehurst," said his Lordship, "you are a little too severe upon the parsons. A good play must be considered as a rational piece of amusement, and therefore I don't see why they are to be exclusively shut out from it. Though, as to the moral effects of any one of them, I am not prepared to go the lengths as some are upon that head."

"Why, my dear father," said Lady Emily, "you do not mean to deny the moral effect of the drama."

"Not altogether," replied his Lordship, "but with me, I must confess the chief excellence of a play, is to please. The spirit of moralizing rarely seizes me in contemplating any scenical character, either on the stage or in the closet."

"Well," said Lady Martman, resolved to break through the taciturnity which she had maintained during the whole of dinner,

"I am

“ I am of opinion that, if it were proper for clergymen to be seen at a theatre, they would receive little entertainment from the horrid trash which is now a-days presented to us, when in the place of a faithful representation of what we meet with in real life, we have nothing but processions, decorations, and scenery.”

“ There is no denying,” observed Charles, “ that most of our present dramatists write more for the eye than for the ear, and that they heighten characters into caricatures. To please for a few weeks or months, is all they desire ; therefore they never seem inspired with the ambition of rendering their genius immortal by imitating some of the various beauties of Shakspeare, the nervous sense of Ben Jonson, the eloquent language of Massinger, or in short any of the excellencies of the old English dramatists.”

“ Very true, Beauford,” said my Lord, “ formerly, indeed, an author endeavoured to draw the representations of his characters from the universal standard of nature, but
now

now that is set aside, and the author writes his play to suit a particular actor, for whom truth and propriety are often completely sacrificed. I do not wish to be numbered with those who are so habituated to magnify the past, at the expence of the present times, as to insist, like the old French Marquis in *Gil Blas*, that even the peaches of modern days were grown worse, but I must say, that dramatic composition, bating a few exceptions, is now at its lowest ebb."

"There would, indeed," "said Dr. Glebmore, "be some excuse for those of my profession appearing at a theatre, if a regular drama were given them;—if the unities were more generally observed."

"Perhaps," said Charles, "the neglect of them may be one of the greatest defects of the modern drama. But, I very much doubt, if our writers were to renounce their vain hopes of originality, and to form themselves on the best models of classical antiquity, whether they could please any but the critics. An English audience is very
little

little concerned about the unities of time and place, and they do not think that the principal event wants less the power to interest by the intervention of what is called a called a double plot. The weeping Comedy, *La Larmoyante Comédie*, I think, as the French term it, could not succeed with our pit and galleries, who decide the fate of most pieces, without the interchanges of mingled scenes of grief and pleasantry, without, as the poet calls them, those

“ Lights and shades, whose well accorded strife,
 “ Gives all the strength and colour of our life.”

“ Well,” said Dr. Glebmore, a little nettled at meeting any thing like contradiction from so young a man as Charles, “ though you are such an advocate for tragedy, you surely are not such an admirer of modern plays, as to affirm they are improved by the rejection of the Chorus.

“ Though I am not,” replied Charles, “ inclined to dispute the propriety and use of it in the Greek and Roman dramas, or its
 5 peculiar

peculiar advantage in giving the representation that air of probability and real life, the want of which is so sensibly felt upon our stage, yet I think that the moderns would be much embarrassed by the adoption of it. I am perfectly aware that Racine, in his two last tragedies, tried the experiment of restoring the chorus, and succeeded in it. But it must be remembered, that the French ever regard a tragedy as a poem, which may be represented on the stage, but they keep in constant recollection it is a poem. Accordingly, fine versification constitutes with them one of the essential beauties of the drama. Long speeches also, if clothed in elegant diction, are by no means fatiguing to Parisian ears. Sampson Agonistes, therefore, might have been highly applauded on their stage, when, perhaps, with all its merits, it would have been driven from ours. For, even Milton's great authority, we see, was not sufficient to restore the chorus with us. No, Doctor, our countrymen would regard it as a most clumsy and unnatural contri-

contrivance, to rectify their wrong conclusions, and to let them know what they ought to approve, being quite satisfied, that they are competent to do that for themselves."

Here Miss Upgrove, ambitious of showing Charles that she was conversant in Italian literature, and thinking that if she named only a few dramatic poets of Italy, he would conclude that she possessed a most refined taste, affectedly exclaimed, " My opinion may be a singular one ; but, in the whole range of the French and English drama, I know not what comedies and tragedies surpass those of Goldoni and Maffei. And the operas of Metastasio are universally acknowledged to be unrivalled."

" Surely," said Lady Emily, " you must allow the merits of Moliere and Racine to surpass the writers you have just now mentioned."

" I cannot, indeed," replied Miss Upgrove ; " pray oblige us with your opinion upon this point, Mr. Beauford."

Now there was something in Miss Upgrove's

grove's tone of voice when she made that request to Charles, which indicated her firm belief that he would coincide with her, whether right or wrong, having taken it into her head, that he admired, as much as she disliked Lady Emily; her expectations, therefore, were not a little disappointed, when Charles unhesitatingly replied, "you must have surely forgotten, Miss Upprove, that a far more able critic than myself was present," politely looking at his Lordship, "when you selected me to decide this question; but, as I suppose my silence would be construed by you into an unpardonable rudeness, I must candidly say, that your judgment appears to me in this particular as erroneous as Voltaire's was, when he vauntingly attempted to cry up the fame of Corneille beyond that of Shakspeare, or as that of those foreigners who have drawn a comparison between Lope de Vega and our immortal bard."

At this answer, a momentary glow of pleasure was suffused over the fair cheek of Lady Emily, which was heightened into
blushes

blushes, when she saw Mrs. Eaglehurst measure her with one of her *long glances*. But, as Miss Upprove had generally the happy art of concealing her mortification under an assumed flow of spirits, she, after a few pauses, rallied her wits, which were somewhat discomposed by Charles's reply, and instantly accused him of being a downright John Bull in his dramatic taste. Finding, however, the position she had taken not very tenable, like a wise general, she prepared to abandon it; and adroitly contrived to shift her ground, without exposing her weakness, by saying to Doctor Glebmore, "Apropos, Doctor, while we are upon the subject of the plays, I should like to know why so many of your learned critics say, that the loss of Menander's dramas are more to be regretted than that of any other ancient writings whatsoever."

"Because the voice of antiquity," replied the Doctor, "passed such high encomiums upon his merit, and styled him the Prince of the
the

the new comedy, and likewise from the fragments which yet remain of him."

"Are there many of those fragments," asked Lady Meeresfield?

"Out of the hundred and eighty comedies, which he is said to have written," answered Doctor Glebmore, "only a few specimens are left.

"I think, Doctor," said his Lordship, "that the Emperor Augustus preferred the old comedy."

"He did so, my Lord," replied the Doctor; "but I cannot applaud his taste."

"His taste, however," said Charles, "strange as it may now seem to us for any one, to set Plautus above Terence, Aristophanes above Menander, did not differ from one, who was otherwise possessed of the utmost niceness of discrimination and delicacy of feeling. Cicero expresses in decided terms his admiration of the coarse wit of the old comedy."

"I am

“ I am not surprised at his partiality in that respect,” said his Lordship, “ since, if my memory is good, corporal defects were oftentimes a topic of raillery with that orator.”

“ Yes, my Lord,” replied Charles, “ a low stature, an ugly face, a distorted chin, or a long nose, are enumerated among the legitimate sources of ridicule by Cicero, whose jokes certainly but ill-accord with the general elegance of his mind. But there were other causes your Lordship must be aware, which led to that deviation from civility and good manners.”

“ I should like to hear what they are,” said the Doctor, with a sort of sarcastic sneer, which shewed he doubted if any other could be mentioned.

“ The originally free and popular governments of Greece and Rome,” said Charles. “ These, by placing all the citizens on an equal footing, left them to pursue their humours, without any fear or of personal offence, which I take to be the strongest restraint

restraint upon the licentiousness of ridicule. The orators therefore had only to pay court to the sovereign people, and they could be amused only with strokes of broad mirth. While, from the long established habit of doing so, they imbibed as strong a relish for the gross banter, and buffoon pleasantries as the people themselves. And it was not till after the Augustan age, when absolute power imposed fetters upon the licentiousness of the populace, that the urbanity and fine propriety of Menander began to be universally felt and admired."

"It is indeed to be lamented," said Lady Meeresfield, "from what you have said about this applauded writer, that the hand of time has not spared one of his performances."

"Some of the plays of Terence, if I mistake not, Doctor Glebmore," said Mr. Featherweight, cautiously avoiding to address himself to Charles, "are supposed to be direct translations from Menander."

"They

“ They are,” replied the Doctor; “ but we may learn at once how unequal he was to his great original, when Cæsar styled him *dimidiate Menander*.”

“ And yet,” said his Lordship, “ it moves my wonder, that a people so gay, lively, and witty, as the Athenians are represented, should become so enamoured with the saturnine and morose genius of Menander.”

“ I imagine, my Lord,” said the Doctor, “ that it was the strict decorum and amiable modesty he introduced into his comedies, that caused him to be the reigning favorite of the Grecian stage. For in the comedies which appeared before the time of Menander, the liberty then was taken of calling those persons by their names, who were designed to be held up to public ridicule. Socrates was often attacked in that manner. When, however, this matchless effrontery fired so many with indignation, the Athenians passed a law which put a stop to that intolerable practice. But, although the comedians were thus restrained from indulging

indulging themselves in their former freedoms by a positive law, yet, to gratify the untutored mob, they invented masks, which bore such an exact resemblance to the persons on whom they designed to joke, that answered the same effect as if they had called them by their names. This usage being deemed no less scandalous than the former, was abolished by another law of the Athenians, which enacted, that no one should be joked on the stage by the exhibition of their faces. The correct taste of Menander had recourse to no such low expedients to amuse his audience, and therefore he was hailed by all the discerning ancients as the Reformer of their stage."

"You will recollect, Doctor," said Charles, "that when Menander wrote, the liberties of Greece were crushed by the aspiring genius of Philip, and the stage refined accordingly. But what rendered that poet so peculiarly the idol of his countrymen, was the inimitable elegance of his comic humour; for, by a singular injustice of fortune, those parts of his voluminous

nous works, which chiefly marked his original genius, have not gone down to posterity, but only those parts which entitle him to take his place as one of the most sarcastic, melancholy, and moral poets of his country ; while his great characteristic excellence, which filled his auditors with so much admiration and delight, appears from the unanimous testimony of his contemporaries, to have been his brilliant gaiety and fancy, and his graceful but high humour."

Now this last observation of Beauford's, as it shewed his Lordship to be so completely ignorant of the real ground of the preference given by the Athenians to their witty countrymen, ruffled his temper so much, that a person of less ordinary discernment might have perceived it ; for though the Earl was so perfect an adept in concealing his feelings and disguising his passions from his equals, yet he was not at all so disposed to accommodate himself to his inferiors. At a loss, however, that moment, in what way to vent his displeasure upon Charles, he

broke up the conversation, by giving a look at his sister for the ladies to withdraw. Presently afterwards they were joined by the gentlemen; and when they had taken their coffee, the visitors rang for their carriages, and took their leave.

As the Squire was standing on the steps of the great hall, waiting for the coming up of his carriage, Mr. Featherweight came and said, "You have not forgotten, Mr. Uprove, that you have honoured me with the appellation of a fool before the whole company. I shall, however, overlook that affront, as I can pretty well guess the vexation you felt at having accepted my offer."

"What," exclaimed the Squire, impetuously interrupting him, "Do you think I'll part with Sultan for sixty guineas? I'll see you damned first."

"I perceive you will oblige me at last," coolly replied Mr. Featherweight, "to teach you good manners. But, Mr. Uprove, if you don't ratify that bargain, I shall take
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the liberty of sending a friend to wait upon you, to settle the business. You understand me. In the mean time, I have ordered my groom to attend you home, and he will pay you sixty guineas upon the delivery of the horse." So saying, he made him a low bow, and wished him a very good night.

CHAP. IX.



THE BALL.



SOME few days after this grand dinner, Charles rode over to Upgrove Hall, to pay a morning visit to the Squire. He found him just returned from coursing, and liberally using some of the polite phrases which are to be found in the Sportsman's Vocabulary, in consequence of his favorite dog being detected in *lurching*. Miss Upgrove soon made her appearance, when the Squire, finding the conversation likely to take a turn that was to him no ways interesting, left

left the room, under the pretence of giving some orders to his game-keeper, which he had forgotten. "Oh! Mr. Beauford," exclaimed Miss Uprove, as soon as her father had shut the door, "Your visit is most opportune; for I am horridly out of humour, and never more wished for an agreeable *tête à tête* in all my life."

"May, I presume to ask;" said Charles half laughing, "what lamentable occurrence in this scene of many coloured life has subjected you to a malady which foreigners only ascribe to the influence of fogs, or the physical effects of sea-coal fires?"

"A horse," replied Miss Uprove, "a horse has been the cause of my labouring ever since I saw you, but in vain, to restore my father to his good temper. But listen to the tale of my extreme discomfort. The moon was up, you know, or at least are to know, when we returned from Beechwood, which enabled me, soon after I had stepped into the carriage, to espy a stranger closely following it on horseback. Heaven's, whis-
pered

pered I to my father, I am terrified beyond description, there is a highwayman behind us. I wish he was any thing, gruffly answered my father, but that puppy's groom. What puppy, said I; why, that Featherweight's, who has sent over for Sultan; and by the rules of the turf, I must accept the offer he made for him, having said *done*." Now, in this account, Miss Uprove did not exactly tell all the truth, as she thought proper to sink the circumstance of her father's groom having assured Mr. Featherweight's, on saying he came to fetch for his master the done up horse Sultan, that there was not one in the stable in higher condition than Sultan, and that his Master meant to have hunted him the next day.

"Come," said Charles, as soon as she had finished her story, "take courage under your tribulations; they are not, I hope, quite insupportable. Now, I am the messenger of news to you, which I think will act very powerfully towards the abatement of your truly pitiable distresses. There is just arrived

rived at Beechwood, a crowd of beaux preparatory to the Ball to-night. Among them is Lord Pensington, and Sir Harry Cleveland; both of them, I know professed admirers of your sex, and therefore will be eager suitors for the honor of your fair hand on this occasion."

"Why, that is a piece of consolatory intelligence to be sure," replied Miss Uprgrove; "pray are those gentlemen, my Lord's acquaintances, or Lady Emily's?"

"My Lord's, I understand," rejoined Charles. "He lately met them at the house of a neighbouring family; and having previously known Lord Pensington, he gave him and his friend an invitation to this splendid fête, which you of course know is expressly in honor of Lady Emily's birth day. By the bye, let me not forget also to announce to you, the arrival of Mr. Eaglehurst, who, by the active part he already takes in the arrangements and decorations for the night, seems to be a very important personage in an affair of this ind."

"Oh,

“ Oh, yes,” said Miss Upgrove, “ Oswald is quite *au fait* at every thing which relates to a ball ; but *apropos*, Mr. Beauford, are you fond of dancing?” “ Exceedingly so,” answered Charles.

“ Then you are not,” replied Miss Upgrove, “ of Falkland’s mind in the *Rivals*, that we ought only to pair with our great uncles in a country dance.”

“ I may be brought to that opinion,” said Charles, smiling, “ if it should ever be my happy lot to be loved by one like his Julia. Till then, I shall exclaim with the poet,

“ Hail leveliest art, that canst all hearts ensnare,
And make the fairest still appear more fair ;
Beauty can little execution do,
Unless she borrows half her arms from you.”

Provoking creature, thought Miss Upgrove to herself, if he likes dancing so much, why does he not engage me for the first sett ? “ I suppose, then, as you guess,” said Miss Upgrove, “ that there will be
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more women to-night than men; it is your intention first to see the contending beauties assembled, in imitation of a certain emperor of the Greeks, before you present the golden apple to any of them."

"No, no," said Charles, laughing, "I am not yet become quite so fastidious. I should have teased you long before this into a promise of dancing with me, if my Lord had not hinted to me this morning, that he expected dispatches this evening; so that in that case, it is very uncertain whether I shall be able to escape from my papers in sufficient time to make my appearance at the ball."

"Well, then," replied Miss Upgrove, "if you do come, I shall not forget that I am engaged to you for two dances." At this instant, the Squire entered, when Charles rose and took his leave.

As Charles returned home, he could not help ruminating on the conduct of my Lord to him that morning, and thinking that it appeared to be too much regulated by
feelings

feelings of personal irritation for the exalted notions which he had formed of his character. For happening to say the day before to Lady Meeresfield, in his Lordship's hearing, that he delighted in the exercise of dancing; "It is unfortunate you do so," was the immediate reply of the Earl, "as I expect dispatches to-morrow evening, which must be immediately answered." Now, there was something so decidedly haughty in the look which accompanied this speech, and so very similar to that which he gave him on exposing his erroneous estimate of the real merits of Menander, as to raise a strong suspicion in Charles's mind, that the Earl had designed this mortification upon him for taking the liberty to which we have just alluded. He determined however carefully to conceal those suspicions within his breast, till he had an opportunity of ascertaining them to a certainty, and then to show his Lordship how totally he had mistaken his character, if he thought he could be seriously chagrined or annoyed by
the

the privation of those pleasures that a ball-room could afford.

But from reflexions of this kind, Charles was roused by the sound of a human voice, expressive of great distress. On stopping his horse to perceive whence it came, he descried an old woman at the turn of the road endeavouring to get up the bank-side, from which she had just fallen. He galloped on immediately to give her assistance. After raising her from the ground, and finding that she had received no material hurt in her fall, but through faintness was scarce able to move, he first collected her scattered stores into her basket, and then made her take hold of his arm to help herself along; when a cart coming accidentally by, he put the old woman into it, after slipping a guinea into her hand. Now, it so turned out, that Lady Emily and her aunt were concealed spectators of this scene; for having taken a stroll into the park, they happened at that very moment to be looking over the park palings when the old woman met with her accident,

accident, and Charles came to her relief. The unaffected kindness and liberality of his behaviour to the poor creature, touched Lady Emily sensibly, insomuch, that when her aunt rather triumphantly challenged her to mention any young man who would have acted precisely in the same manner if he was sure there were no beholders to witness and applaud his benevolence, she could not refrain from saying, that the qualities of Mr. Beauford's heart seemed quite equal to those of his head.

Soon after Charles's return, my Lord's valet knocked at his door, to acquaint him that his Lordship waited for him in the private library. "I am truly sorry, Beauford," said the Earl, as he entered the room, "that these dispatches should have arrived at this unlucky hour, as I am afraid they will be the means of spoiling the entertainment you had promised yourself this night; but your philosophy doubtless," added he, while a malicious smile appeared on his countenance, "will enable you to support
such

such a disappointment with perfect equanimity of temper."

"If it could not, my Lord," replied Charles, while he fixed his eyes so expressively upon him, that his absolutely fell beneath them, "my pretensions would be, if possible, still more slender than they are to that most dignified and exalted of characters." Having said this, he received his instructions without uttering another word, and then withdrew to his apartment.

As my readers have been already told, that the plan of Earl Altamont's mansion united extent with magnificence, and elegance with convenience, there was therefore no occasion for the inventive taste of machinists to transform so many apartments into a ball-room. Adjoining the saloon, was a room in the form of a pavilion, supported by pillars ornamented with wreaths, in which, from its noble dimensions, fifty couple might trip it "on the light fantastic toe," with all imaginable ease. At ten o'clock
the

the chief neighbouring families had assembled, when,

“ With spirits light, to every joy in tune.”

Mr. Eaglehurst opened the ball with Lady Emily, who was dressed with that perfection of art which imparted additional poignancy to those external charms which so many of our sex esteem all that is valuable in woman. This arrangement had been effected by the manœuvres of Mrs. Eaglehurst: who, ever watchful to embrace any plausible opportunity of shewing the world what a close intimacy existed between Lady Emily and her son, had persuaded my Lord in the morning to appoint Oswald master of the ceremonies for the evening, which would entitle him to the honor of handing Lady Emily to the top of the dance; by which means, any awkward or unpleasant circumstance that might arise from so many persons of equal rank being present, who would all naturally aspire to the honor of leading
off

off the first dance with her Ladyship, would be entirely obviated. Upon this notion, the Earl gave a ready consent; whereas, the real drift of Mrs. Eaglehurst was no other, than that of affording his Lordship's titled visitors a reasonable ground of construing this proceeding, into my Lord's decided sanction of his daughter's partiality for Oswald, and thereby signifying more strongly than by words, that any marked attentions from them would be very unfavourably received.

The Earl was unusually gay and gallant at the commencement of the evening; and all but his daughter partook of his animation and sprightliness. She alone was silent, pensive and abstracted; yet apprehensive of giving any one the most distant glimpse into what really passed in her mind, she occasionally made an effort to converse upon commonplace subjects; fearful, if she started any other to her different partners, she should say something quite foreign to the purpose. The object, however, who secretly engrossed
all

all her thoughts, was then in the solitude of his closet, perfectly unconscious that his presence was desired by any one of the company; but making every exertion to be present, solely with the view of satisfying his curiosity as to the manner in which his Lordship would notice his appearance. Had Lady Emily, indeed, been less indifferent about Charles, his absence upon such a night might have well excited her surprise, though it should have failed in giving her uneasiness. But, entangled as she knew her heart to be beyond recovery, she felt herself truly miserable. For, ignorant of the real cause of Charles's absence, she had considered it voluntary, and purposely intended as a mark of disrespect to her. To have rendered herself therefore the peculiar object of aversion to that being whom above all others she preferred, was an idea scarcely to be endured. But, when accompanied with the conviction that she had merited this aversion by her coldness and *hauteur* to him, she, at times, became agitated and
and

and distressed almost to the shedding of tears.

In the midst of these pungent sensations, Miss Martman tapped her Ladyship on the arm with her fan, and whispering to her, said, " Pray tell me, Lady Emily, what is become of that charming young man, Mr. Beauford? I am quite out of spirits at not finding him here. I do assure you I have looked towards the door so often, in the hopes of seeing him enter, that my head downright aches, and I am more fit to be in bed, than to dance. Your eyes, I have observed too, have often taken the same direction; perhaps he promised to dance with you; if so, you must be disappointed enough; for who would not rather have him for a partner than that finical and conceited Lord Pensington, who is perfumed, as the man says in the play, like a milliner, or his stupid friend Sir Harry, who, all the time I was dancing with him, kept asking me nothing but whether I had been in Italy, or was fond of old pictures."

If the tendency of these remarks served to confuse Lady Emily, she was thrown into much greater embarrassment by her father at that moment hastily approaching her, and observing, that she appeared quite exhausted, and therefore he begged she would sit down the next two dances. A few minutes afterwards, whilst she was assuring her father, that however fatigued she might seem, she was far from being so, a Lady came up to my Lord, and pertly said, "Most of my female friends here are asking what is become of your Lordship's handsome Secretary; and some of them declare, that, in mercy to us, you have shut him up in your Library to-night, for fear we should all fall desperately in love with him." Now really Charles had been an object of very general enquiry; for his fame had already gone abroad, and several of the neighbouring families had expressed a wish to be introduced to him, in consequence of the eulogies which had been passed on his character by those who had met him at Beechwood:

Not

Not a little annoyed by the unexpected interrogatory of this Lady, the Earl somewhat pompously answered, "Oh, madam, the affairs of state must give way to those of pleasure. Had, however, Mr. Beauford been apprised of your wishes, I durst say he would have contrived to gratify them; but now the thing is impossible, quite impossible." At that very moment the door opened, and Charles entered. "See there, my Lord," replied the Lady, pointing to Charles, "there is a Gentleman just come in, and by his very graceful figure, I am sure that must be your Secretary." At this speech, Lady Emily looked towards the door, and was so much astonished when she found that it was really Charles who had entered, that she could not stir from the place where she stood. The feelings of my Lord were similar to those of his daughter; but being a much better dissembler, he had, by the time that Charles approached him, so far recovered his astonishment, and mastered his anger, as to say to him, "This is an agreeable surprise,

Beauford, which you have given us at this late hour;—but come, I won't detain you an instant, as you must endeavour to make up for your lost time before supper. Here now is a Lady," looking at her who had noticed his entrance, "that I am pretty certain will not refuse you her hand for a dance or two."

"I should be most happy," instantly replied Charles, "in having that honor; but I see Miss Upprove is at this moment seated, and as she was so obliging as to make me a promise of dancing with me this evening, if I could dispatch my business to appear here before supper; which it is scarcely necessary, my Lord, to add, I have done, it would be an unpardonable breach of gallantry not to avail myself of this opportunity of claiming that promise." So saying, he politely bowed to the Lady, and moved immediately on to Miss Upprove, who, with a smile, welcomed his approach, and gave him her hand as soon as he asked for it.

Vexed

Vexed and mortified to a degree, that her pride could not even revive her, Lady Emily, according to the injunctions of her father, declined all invitations to dance. She had not long been seated, when there was a kind of general move towards the top of the room. Desirous of learning the cause, she rose with that intention, when Miss Martman came hurrying up to her, and said, if you wish to see a capital style of dancing, or the finest young man in the room, you must come and see Mr. Beauford, for the whole company is staring at him with admiration, and Miss Ugrove, I do assure you, is quite animated also from being his partner. At this last sentence, Lady Emily changed colour, which Miss Margaret perceiving, directly exclaimed, in her blunt way, "Why now, is it possible that you are jealous, because this youth prefers Miss Ugrove to any one else in the room? For my part, though he is such a handsome fellow, yet I am not such a fool as to give my heart to any person, without being certain of having one in return. Besides,

though

though I might shew myself superior to all mercenary considerations, in the case of Mr. Beauford making an offer to me, yet I am far from being positive, that my papa and mama could be prevailed upon, with all my entreaties to give their consent to my marrying your father's secretary."

Incensed beyond measure at the coarse effrontery of this speech, Lady Emily immediately replied, with an air of high displeasure, "I should be sorry, indeed, Miss Martman, if I thought I had given any one just cause to interpret my looks and actions in the manner you have done. But of that there can be little fear. You must, however, permit me to say, that before you hazard such a remark again, it would become you to be a little more impressed with a belief of the fallibility of your senses. Nor can I forbear also adding, that it must be a matter of perfect indifference to me with whom you may think fit to enter into the state of matrimony." Having said this, she returned immediately to her seat, leaving
Miss

Miss Margaret more enraged than abashed with the reproof she had so deservedly received.

When the dance was finished, Charles led Miss Upgrove to a seat near Lady Emily. "You appear quite tired, my dear," said her Ladyship, making room for her.

"I have indeed almost over exerted myself," replied Miss Upgrove. "But that is generally my case, whenever I have a partner who can dance, which, by the bye, is no very usual thing in this country."

"You seem fond of dancing, Mr. Beauford," said Lady Emily, graciously.

"I certainly prefer it," replied Charles, "to conversation, when I am in a ball-room."

"I began to think," said Miss Upgrove, "that after it had struck eleven, you would not have made your appearance."

"Had Mr. Beauford," quickly rejoined her Ladyship, "absented himself this night, I should have deemed it a very ill compliment paid to me." Now she uttered these
few

few words in a tone of voice so entirely different to that which she had hitherto spoken to Charles, as to produce a very pleasing sensation to his feelings, and when he looked at her, and beheld her eyes modestly thrown on the ground, fearful what construction he would put upon that sentence, he answered with a glow of joy, which he could not conceal, "As a proof, of not having incurred your Ladyship's displeasure, will you honor me with your hand for the two next dances?"

"I did not intend to have stood up again," replied Lady Emily, with a most bewitching smile; "but after what you have just now said, I scarcely know how to refuse your request." At that instant Lady Meeresfield and Oswald approached, while the latter told her that supper was announced, and added, that he claimed in virtue of his office, as Master of the Ceremonies, which he flattered himself he had discharged to her satisfaction and to the rest of
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the company the exclusive honor of conducting her to a seat.

“ Well then,” said lady Emily to Charles, “ if you are disposed to remind me after supper of what I have said, I shall be at your service.” Charles had only time to bow his head by way of thanking her, before Oswald hurried away her Ladyship and her aunt into the supper-room; when Miss Upgrove slowly followed them, leaning upon her partner’s arm.

The inexpressible satisfaction Lady Emily felt, upon discovering that the strong partiality which she in secret nourished for Charles, was not returned, on his part, by a confirmed dislike, rendered her so animated at supper, that her spirits seemed to overflow involuntarily on all around her. None was more evidently pleased than Mrs. Eaglehurst, at seeing her so gay and happy; for, imputing this alteration in her manner solely to the circumstance of Oswald’s being near her, she thought to herself, how very soon he would arrive at the wished for goal. As

soon

soon as ever supper was over, she retired to her apartment, her mind occupied with the delightful idea of speedily witnessing the nuptials of her son and Lady Emily.

The moment that Charles saw Lady Emily enter the ball-room, he hastened to her, and with a countenance expressive of the happiness he was to receive, reminded her of her recent engagement. Her heart beat tumultuously as she beheld him approach, while her fine blue eyes cast upon him a look, which was hardly possible for him not to interpret into any other meaning than that of satisfaction at his coming. Now whatever truth there may be in the assertion, which has been so often made by stern moralists, that liberty and licentiousness are terms synonymous in country dances, yet innate modesty will always respect itself, and be respected even in its gayest and freest moments. Whilst, therefore, Lady Emily abandoned herself, as it were to the inspiration of the moment, and was all soul as she danced with Charles ;
yet

yet every word, look, and gesture, were indicative of the utmost delicacy and purity. Charles now, for the first time, saw in Lady Emily that playfulness, that versatility of expression, and those touches of sensibility, which are so irresistibly attractive and fascinating. It was now that the full radiance of her beauty displayed itself; she came upon him at once, like the sun from behind a cloud; and surely no man, who had a heart and feelings like Charles's, could contemplate this delightful vision without emotion.

When the dance was over, and Charles was listening with delight to the remarks of his partner, and thinking to himself how little he expected to find such a similarity of tastes in her, whose reserve and pride he had deemed equal to her beauty, Miss Martman, that evil genius of Lady Emily, stepped up to her and said, "I am sure, Lady Emily, as you have called this very long dance, and have gone down it twice, you must be exceedingly tired. I am quite ready, therefore, while
you

you rest and compose yours^{self}, to take Beau-
ford off your hands for the next dance."

"I am obliged to you," replied her Ladyship, "for your kind offer," perfectly aware of the motives which dictated it, "but I have not the least occasion to avail myself of it at present."

Miss Martman bit her lips, and gave a spiteful look at her Ladyship; but yet resolved to carry her point, she sought Lord Altamont, and in her straight forward way told him, that if he did not wish to see his daughter faint before the evening was over, he would persuade her to sit down the next dance. Alarmed at this intelligence, he hastily came to Lady Emily, and was somewhat startled when he found her *tête-à-tête* with his secretary; but recollecting that they had been just dancing together, and that circumstance sanctioning this temporary familiarity, without appearing, to notice it, he said, "You quite surpassed yourself, my dear, in the last dance. Indeed, though you are my daughter, I must
pay

pay you the compliment of saying, that your dancing was not only the admiration of your father, but likewise of the whole company. Miss Martman, however, assures me that you are quite exhausted, and is good-natured enough to say, that she will be your substitute for the next dance with Mr. Beauford."

Without deigning to manifest the least signs of vexation or anger, at this officious behaviour of Miss Martman, Lady Emily calmly replied, " I am afraid, my Lord, Miss Martman will think, I make a very ungrateful return for the solicitude she is pleased to express about my health, when I beg to be excused from complying with her request." She then turned to Charles, and asked him to bring her a glass of orgeat, and afterwards began some lively conversation with her father, which completely frustrated Miss Margaret's views. Invincible, however, in assurance, she still persisted that Lady Emily must be tired, and intreated her not to use any disguise with her, as it would afford her
much

much pleasure to accommodate her Ladyship upon this or any other occasion.

As Charles was returning with the orgeat, he was familiarly accosted by Oswald, who, after asking to whom he was going to administer that restorative to broken-down dancers, without any sort of preface, said, "I wish you joy, my dear fellow; for the heiress, I clearly foresee, will be your's in the end. My old foolish, but fond mother, wished me, I believe, to be upon the look out in that quarter; but *entre nous*, there is too much dignity, too much of the old school in her Ladyship, for your humble—you take me, Beauford. Curse me, if I would not almost as soon hear one of her father's long speeches, as be obliged to support a conversation with her for an hour, without the introduction of a third person. No, no, my boy, I am for the free and easy; though, upon honor, I must allow she is a devilish fine creature."

To this unexpected address, Charles thought it most prudent to make no reply;

but still, visibly deficient as it was in delicacy or refinement, it yet raised in his breast a train of agreeable sensations, which he was loth to expel. On approaching Lady Emily, he found her surrounded by an admiring circle. Among the voices which were rapturously extolling her dancing, Lord Pensington's was the loudest. "May I never read Zimmerman again," exclaimed the Peer, "if you do not dance divinely, Lady Emily, quite *a la Française*." Then turning to Charles, whom he had scarcely condescended to recollect at their first meeting, but with whom he now affected to be upon a familiar footing, as he perceived his acquaintance with Charles did himself credit; "Why Beauford," said he, "you were reckoned at college a very clever fellow, but I never knew that you had been such a first-rate dancer. Upon honor, I don't think, my dear friend, Townley, who has just returned from Paris, could have gone down the last sett in a finer style than you have done."

"Yes,"

“Yes,” said the forward Miss Martman, who was standing near his Lordship, “if all of you were like him, there would be no frippery or nonsense among you fine gentlemen. But it is not every one, you know,” looking his Lordship full in the face, “who is as clever with his head as with his heels.” Just then Oswald came up, and overhearing the last words of Miss Martman, he whispered into his Lordship’s ear, “Egad Pen, the girl is making a quizz at you; move off, therefore, and leave me to manage the rustic.”

“Why, as I don’t well understand these simple characters,” replied the Peer, “I think I will take your advice.” So saying, he threw a supercilious look at Miss Martman, and immediately joined Mr. Upgrove and his daughter.

“What,” cried out Miss Martman, “does the man take me for a cannibal, and so hurries away for fear I should eat him up.”

“Oh no,” replied Oswald, to whom she had addressed herself, “he does not quite yet set you down for one of the anthropophagi species,

species, though murder hovers in those eyes of thine. In spite, however, of their destructive influence," (here Oswald pretended to look down, and drew as deep a sigh as ever came from a tragedian,) "I am bold enough to request your fair hand for the next dance."

Perceiving that all hope was lost of dancing with Charles, Miss Martman graciously consented to stand up with Oswald; and as he paid her a profusion of compliments, she, not having the most distant idea that they were all said in banter, and by no means accustomed to sweeteners of that kind, began almost to persuade herself that he was nearly as charming a fellow as Charles; though when she contemplated his fine figure, as he moved gracefully down the dance with Lady Emily, she could not help wishing, from the bottom of her heart, that he had been her partner instead of Oswald. Indeed, never was being happier than Charles at that moment; for under that delightful illusion, which is created by the magic of love, he was

gaiety, pleasantry, and attention. And when the time arrived that the company began to disperse, and he saw some quite sinking with languor and lassitude, he almost wondered that they should be so jaded, spiritless, and impatient to be gone; for so little did he participate in any of those feelings of palled satiety, that instead of retiring to his chamber to sleep, he passed the remainder of the night in meditating on the superior talents, accomplishments, and beauty of Lady Emily.

CHAP. X.



La meme fermeté qui sert a' résister à l'amour, sert aussi le à rendre violent et durable ; et les personnes foibles qui sont toujours agitées de passions, n'en sont presque jamais veritablement remplies.

ROCHEFOUCAULT.



THERE are, perhaps, few remarks which appear to stand less in fear of contradiction, than that a man seldom entertains a real attachment to a woman, without his passion being known to her before he is fully sensible of it himself. In the present case, however, it was otherwise ; since Lady Emily had fixed her thoughts upon Charles,

when every trivial circumstance seemingly conspired to remind her, that so far from his conceiving a passion of the like kind for her, she was to him only an object of indifference or aversion. But pride enabled her to conceal, for a long time, what her feelings could not conquer ; and her efforts for this purpose served, therefore, to render the sensations of her heart still more overwhelming. When, however, she found it was no longer possible to hide that thought which occupied her abroad, at home, at night, by day, and it at last overflowed, the exquisiteness of her sensibility increased in proportion as her reserve diminished. Led thus to make a fuller exposure of her susceptibility than those of her sex, who make the passion of love subservient to their worldly advantages, we must not then accuse Charles of vanity or presumption in flattering himself, that he had made an impression upon the heart of Lady Emily ; for though not a syllable had passed between them on the subject of love, yet in the artless indications of her looks and emotions, it was

was easy for him to perceive that he was the man she wished to distinguish above all others. Nor ought our readers to arraign the conduct of Charles as romantic or unnatural, in falling in love with one, who, till the ball, had only testified to him complete indifference, not to call it by a stronger name; since it must be remembered, that Lady Emily's beauty had excited his admiration the first moment that he beheld her; and though her subsequent behaviour, till the night when the ball took place, had given rise to a great coldness betwixt them, yet all her former pride and distance towards him, now that he thought that they were used for the purpose of drawing a veil over her attachment, so far from checking his rising passion, rendered her, upon that very account, more deeply interesting to him. They, indeed, must have perused but few pages of this volume, who can suppose that Charles was of a turn and temper of mind, which, with all its eagerness to enter into the circle of ambition,

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tion, could, for the sake of it, be led to suppress in his bosom one of the noblest and most generous propensities of our nature. The wealth of the Indies, would not have tempted him to give his hand where he could not promise his heart; nor would the prospect of the highest honors have urged him, deliberately and systematically, to ensnare the affections of his patron's daughter; but when, with the most attractive sweetness and sentimental tenderness they were offered to him, he felt that it was impossible for him to shut his heart against the approaches of such beauty and merit.

It must not however be supposed, that Charles had such a high sense of his own deserts, as to be quite confident of the impression which he had made upon Lady Emily; since there were times when he had as fully worked himself up to believe, that he had entirely mistaken the motives of Lady Emily's attentions to him, as at other periods he yielded his mind to the delightful
idea

idea of being beloved by her. Thus in the beautiful language of the Poet,

Hope and fear alternate sway'd his breast,
Like light and shade upon a waving field
Coursing each other, when the flying clouds
Now hide and now reveal the sun.

Deeply agitated with these contending emotions, Charles left his chamber, and walked into the park; without considering whither he went, so absorbed was he in reflection, until he had arrived at the path which led directly to the Thornery. Now nothing, perhaps, would have induced him, a few days ago, to strike into that path; but actuated by his present sentiments, he could not resist his desire of entering a building, to which he was aware none presumed to approach, without an invitation from Lady Emily. On coming to it, he paused, however, for a moment, whether he should enter; but the recollection, that none of the family could be up at so early an hour, brought him to a decision.

When

When he had admired, for some time, the classic simplicity with which the room was decorated, his eye was caught by a portfolio of drawings, which laid most invitingly open for inspection. After turning over several of them, he came to a very spirited sketch of Lady Meeresfield. Upon taking it up to look at it with more attention, he found a small piece of paper carefully tacked to it, which, on opening, he discovered to contain a likeness of himself, so extremely accurate, that it was impossible for him to mistake it. The astonishment and joy of Charles on this disclosure, may be more easily conceived than described. Again and again he examined the sketch, and the more he surveyed it, the more he felt delighted at this unequivocal proof of attachment; while as he returned home, he abandoned himself to that delicious train of reflections, which this unexpected discovery so naturally inspired.

With feelings far less disposed than Charles to indulge the imagination in painting scenes favorable to future happiness, Lady
Emily

Emily had quitted her chamber. For, having gone to bed with her mind happy beyond measure at the thoughts of being beloved by Charles, yet, full of sad forebodings at the almost invincible opposition she should have to encounter from her father to their union, her dreams were influenced in a similar way during the whole night. At one time, she imagined herself in Beechwood Chapel, splendidly attired, surrounded by a large groupe of friends, who had assembled there to grace her nuptials with Charles; when soon after she thought her father entered, and, to her utter amazement and horror, drawing a poignard from his side, with an uplifted arm sought the breast of Charles;—upon which, she seemed to throw herself immediately between them, and to implore the blessings of eternal Providence upon her father's head, if he would spare the life of her betrothed husband; when, nothing moved by her cries and supplications, he appeared first to plunge the dagger into the bosom of Charles, and then into his own, uttering with his last breath

breath the heaviest imprecations upon her filial disobedience.

So disturbed was her Ladyship by these visions, that when she actually awoke, it was along time before she could shake them off from her remembrance ; and when she came into the breakfast-room, there appeared such an exceeding languor in her looks, that her aunt could not refrain from asking her if she was unwell, and all who were present expressed their fears that she had over-exerted herself last night. Lord Pensington taking a chair beside her, began to pay her a profusion of compliments upon the delicacy of her looks, which, he said, indicated that sensibility so justly characterised by his favorite Zimmerman, as the most touching of female charms. Indeed, it was quite obvious, from the very assiduous court which this noble disciple of the German sentimentalist had paid to Lady Emily, ever since he had been at Beechwood, that his heart was completely captivated by her beauty. In the midst, however, of one of his Lordship's fine speeches,

speeches, he, who was the first of human beings in Lady Emily's eye, entered the room. Hitherto Charles's manner in passing the usual compliments of the day to her Ladyship, had been very distant; but now he approached her with a respectful tenderness and animation which thrilled through the soul of this lovely creature; and though, from Lord Pensington's keeping his place near her, he was precluded from a long conversation, yet he contrived to evince his solicitude about her health, upon seeing the interesting languor spread over her features, in those emphatic words, which Lady Emily felt meant more than meet the ear.

But short as their conversation was, Lord Pensington clearly perceived the satisfaction with which her Ladyship listened to every word said, and the fit of silence into which she fell as soon as ever he left her. Too much enamoured, however, with the symmetry and elegance of his own person, to discover the superiority of Charles in both these respects, and too well assured that the instant he
made

made a declaration of his passion, it would be favourably received, he recovered his good humour the moment Charles had quitted the room. Indeed, so great was the fascination of self-conceit in this young nobleman, that interpreting the attentions which Lady Emily had shewn him as her father's visitor, into as great an admiration of his person, as he really felt for her's, he resolved to take the extravagant step of making proposals to Earl Altamont for her hand, in the firm conviction, that they would be equally acceptable to the daughter and father, notwithstanding his recent acquaintance with both of them.

When he returned, therefore, from his ride with Lady Emily, in the course of which he had taken the opportunity of bestowing that sort of fulsome praises upon her beauty, which produced quite the contrary effect to what was intended, he sought the Earl, and with very little preface, introduced the topic so near his heart. The suddenness of this proposal, it may be easily imagined, startled the Earl not a little; but
aware

aware of the commanding influence of him who made it, inasmuch as several members in a certain eminent assembly owed their seats to his patronage; he therefore civilly thanked his Lordship for the high opinion he entertained of his daughter, and, without even glancing at the folly of his being so precipitate on the occasion, assured him he would leave Lady Emily entirely to her own decision.

“You will just then act as I wish, my Lord,” said the noble lover.

“For, to say the truth,” continued the Earl, “my daughter, young as she is, has afforded me so many proofs of an affectionate heart, and judgment superior to the generality of her sex, that I cannot think, however I may feel inclined, of interposing my parental authority in this affair.”

“Parental authority,” repeated Lord Pensington, “what then has she given her heart to some happier man!”

“If she had, my Lord,” replied the Earl, “a moment’s reflection might have told you,
that

that I should have stopped you short in your discourse."

"Then, my Lord," replied the coxcomb, involuntarily throwing his eyes upon a mirror which gave him a full view of his person, and affectedly tossing up his head, "I flatter myself there will be no need for *parental authority upon this occasion*. All I request is, that you will allow me this evening, for indispensable business calls me away at an early hour to-morrow, to solicit an audience of her Ladyship, for the purpose of laying my heart and fortunes at her feet."

After what he had said, the Earl knew not well how to deny his request. Accordingly he consented; but being somewhat astonished by the confident tone of success which his Lordship had assumed, he determined to sound Charles upon the character that his Lordship had acquired at college, and if he found it correspond with his conceptions of it, to withhold his consent, even should his daughter have conceived a violent passion for him, which, he did her
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the justice to believe, could not be the case under existing circumstances. When they had conversed for some time afterwards, upon indifferent subjects, the two Lords separated; the one in search of Charles, the other to his apartment, to interweave some beautiful sentiment of Zimmerman in the avowal of his passion to Lady Emily; since he, like Alexander with the works of Homer, never travelled or visited without carrying with him the Treatise upon Solitude.

In crossing the gallery which led to Charles's apartment, the Earl met Mrs. Eaglehurst, and to her he related the particulars of the conversation which he had just then held with Lord Pensington. This news came like an electrical shock upon that lady: but, as she could not, with any sort of propriety, affect to be acquainted with the vices and weaknesses of one whom she had only known a few days ago, there was nothing left for her but to hint, in pretty strong terms, that these sudden attachments seldom lasted long;

long; and that, in her humble opinion, it would have been more respectful and delicate to her Ladyship, had Lord Pensington been less forward in the confession of his passion. Being informed by the Earl of his design to question Charles, respecting his Lordship's character and acquirements, Mrs. Eaglehurst told him, that he had just entered the shrubbery adjoining the house, and added, that as she was going to take a stroll there, she would send him directly home. Away then she hurried in pursuit of him, as this intention of the Earl had suggested to her mind the invention of a story, which, judging of Charles's feelings by her own, would operate powerfully upon him to lend his countenance to her low and selfish artifices. In less than ten minutes Mrs. Eaglehurst found Charles. They took, however, a few turns, before she opened the business which brought her to him, in the hopes that their conversation would lead to some circumstance, in which she

she

she might naturally introduce the name of Lord Pensington. But finding no opportunity of this kind occur, she, after a little hesitation, as if a sudden thought had just struck her, abruptly said, "My dear Mr. Beauford, you will pardon the question I am going to put to you, and attribute it to that curiosity which is so often alleged to be inseparable from our sex;—but, may I ask whether I am right or wrong, in supposing that you and Lord Pensington were not on friendly terms when you were at Christ Church?"

"Why, Madam," replied Charles, "I certainly cannot boast of having received any particular attentions from his Lordship."

"I thought so," answered Mrs. Eaglehurst with seeming warmth, "from the insinuations which he threw out this morning against you."

"Pray let me know them," said Charles.

"Most willingly," replied Mrs. Eagle-

hurst, "as I entirely subscribe to the sentiment of the poet Gay, that

"An open foe may prove a curse,
"But a pretended friend is worse."

Yet you must not set me down for a tale-bearer in doing so, since there is no character," added she, with an air of uncommon earnestness, "for which I entertain a more profound contempt. But to the point—happening about an hour ago to be launching out in your praises before Lord Pensington, for, I believe, it is the nature of us women when we have a favorite, to make him the constant subject of our talk, he observed, as soon as ever I paused, that it always gave him pain to differ from a lady; but in the present case, he could say, with the most dispassionate candour, and from incontestible authority, that I had committed an error of judgment, in so highly extolling Beauford's intellectual acquirements, for that he had
only

only a smattering of knowledge ; although it was not to be disputed, but that he had a very happy art of shewing himself off in conversation. His Lordship then went on to say, that your tutor had taken all occasions to cry you up, in return for the doses of flattery which you ministered to him ; and concluded by asking me, how it was possible for any marks of real genius, or deep thought, to be clearly traced in one, who, it was evident from his last night's performance, had devoted so much of his time to excel in the frivolous accomplishment of dancing."

To say that Charles heard this story unmoved, would be to class him "with those faultless monsters" which exist only in the pages of romance. He therefore answered, "I should be wanting, Mrs. Eaglehurst, in the common feelings of a man, not to speak out against one, whom I conscientiously believe to have been swayed, in most of his actions, by the meanest motives. That you may not, however, suppose me, in making this assertion, to be hurried away by any

present animosity, I will relate to you an anecdote of Lord Pensington, the truth of which, on account of its notoriety, will not be denied even by his Lordship. A clergyman had been promised a valuable living in the gift of Lord Pensington's father. But unfortunately being of a temper, which could not manifest an entire abject submission to the will of his son, he had once or twice ventured to contradict him in argument; and the consequence was, that because he would not suffer him to imagine his will to be, upon all occasions, the standard of right and wrong, he blackened his character in that degree to his father, that when the preferment became vacant, he gave it to another. The conduct of his son was at last painted in its true colours to the aged peer;—and so incensed was he, that a child of his should be thus regardless of all moral principle, all sense of dignity and of honesty, that he immediately sent the clergyman a draught upon his banker to a considerable amount, and likewise left him an annuity, by way

way of compensation for the loss he had sustained."

Delighted to hear of this anecdote, as now there was every reason to conclude that Charles would not forget to mention it to the Earl when called upon to deliver his opinion respecting Lord Pensington, Mrs. Eaglehurst, after receiving Charles's assurances of never telling to any person without exception, what had just now fallen from her lips, carelessly said to him, as if she had just remembered the circumstance; "Oh, by the way, Beauford, Lord Altamont stopped me for a moment as I was going through the Hall, and begged me if I met you in my walk, to send you to his room directly." Full of joy, with the idea how admirably she had converted Charles into an instrument for seconding her views, this cunning woman saw him depart; while she determined not to make even the most distant allusion to Lord Pensington before the Earl, that he might have

have another proof of her delicacy and reserve being equal to her judgment.

“ I wish, Beauford,” said the Earl, as soon as ever he had entered the room, and taken a seat, “ to open myself to you on a subject in which your opinion will materially influence my conduct; as I have no doubt that you take a sincere concern in the success or disappointment of my family views.”

“ I hope, my Lord,” replied Charles, “ I shall never give you cause to think otherwise.”

“ I do believe you will not,” answered the Earl; “ and therefore it is, that I inform you of the proposals of marriage for my daughter, which I have this morning received from Lord Pensington, in order that I may learn from your report, to form a proper estimate of his Lordship’s virtues and endowments. For you must have had those opportunities of noticing them, when at College with him, which will enable you
to

to sum up his character in a few words, with no less correctness than impartiality."

Luckily for Charles, the Earl at that moment stooped to pick up a paper which he had just pushed off the table, or else had he looked at Charles, he must have seen by his countenance the palpitation into which his heart was thrown by this unexpected intelligence. Now never was there a fairer opportunity given to Charles for blasting all Lord Pensington's wishes by a word;—but though his nature was fiery and impetuous, and he firmly accredited every syllable of the tale which Mrs. Eaglehurst had just then forged, yet he was too high-minded to think of taking a mean and unmanly advantage of his Lordship upon that account. It was, indeed, one of his maxims, that the noblest species of revenge was to have the power to do a thing, but not to do it; and therefore, after a slight struggle within himself, he said, "Your Lordship needs not
my

my assurances, that I should be most happy to comply with your wishes, if it were in my power: but as I was not honoured with the familiarity of his Lordship at College, I am a perfect stranger to the qualities of his heart."

"But those of his head," replied the Earl, "you must be quite competent to speak of. Come, tell me, the authors with which he had the most constant acquaintance; for, when I know them, I can pretty well judge of the turn of his mind."

"I am sure, my Lord," answered Charles, "that you will acquit me of any intentional design to exhibit the understanding of Lord Pensington in an unfavourable light, when I venture to say, that his favourite authors are Zimmerman, Rousseau, Sterne, and Lavater."

"What," said the Earl hastily, "are these the favourite writings of one who, from his rank, ought to take a share in active life? An occasional perusal of them perhaps may
be

be of some service in so far as relates to the selection of striking particulars in point of expression;—but if these are his familiar companions, I am convinced his stock of useful and solid knowledge will ever be but scanty and imperfect.”

“ May we not hope and believe,” asked Charles, “ that when a youthful mind, like that of Lord Pensington, is once freed from the influence of those errors which are engendered by the too frequent perusal of the class of authors just now mentioned, it will take an equally firm hold of those speculative and active principles which lead men in his sphere of life, to devote themselves to the service of their country ?”

“ When our sensibility terminates in imagination,” replied the Earl, “ and which is the case of all those who adopt the sentimental system of Zimmerman, I am afraid the evil is beyond remedy.”

“ Well, my Lord,” answered Charles, “ whatever may be your determination with
respect

respect to Lord Pensington, you must permit me to observe, that justice to him requires, you should not take his character from my report; since there is nothing improbable in the supposition that those very parts of it, which I am now disposed to censure, I might, were I better acquainted with his Lordship, feel it my duty to bestow unqualified praise."

Thus ended a conversation which left Charles a prey to the most melancholy reflexions, when he withdrew to his own apartment. For, he felt that even after Lady Emily had refused Lord Pensington, since he well knew that he was not the man who could attach her, himself put entirely out of the case, that his own prospects of happiness were still as unlikely to be realized as ever. "Henceforth," said Charles to himself, "my sentiments and sensations must be in eternal opposition to each other. Since honor, gratitude, pride, and the dread of being hateful and despicable to all the world and to myself, alike

alike forbid me to think of love. And, yet I feel that her charms have acquired too great an ascendancy over my heart, for me ever to behold them with indifference—Which way I look, then, I see nothing but misery as my future doom. For, even supposing that in a moment of weakness she consented to be mine, how soon, how very soon, would she, who has been accustomed to regard as law, even the slightest intimation of her father's will, discover, that in abandoning her filial duty, she lost sight of happiness for ever. While I aware how deservedly I had rendered myself an object of detestation and resentment to her father, by suffering her to do so, could never think of my conduct as long as any sensibility was left in me, without feeling all the agony of horror and remorse; and although I should know it was beyond the power of him to wreak his vengeance upon me, yet I should feel enough of those sentiments to embitter the remainder of my life. All then I can resolve to do, since I cannot
conquer

conquer my passion, is to conceal it from every human eye."

These reflexions, and others of a like tendency, had so agitated the mind of Charles, that when dinner was announced, he found himself quite unequal to join the company. As he knew that his absence would be imputed to business, he told his servant that he wished to repose himself for a few hours, under the pretext of having a head-ache, and accordingly desired that he might not be disturbed. Sleep, however, was quite banished from his eyes; and he passed several hours in vainly endeavouring to bring the most violent and active of passions under the control of reason; and to attend to the dull realities of life, instead of indulging his fancy in expectations of romantic happiness.

It was late therefore in the evening when Charles rang for his servant, and as he did not immediately answer his summons, he somewhat angrily asked him, why he had been so long in coming.

"I beg

“ I beg your pardon, Sir,” replied the man, “ for being so inattentive; but my Lord Pensington’s valet, having slipt down stairs about an hour ago; and bruised his arm very much, I was helping him to pack up his master’s things, when they came to tell me, that your bell was ringing.”

“ What,” said Charles, not a little astonished, “ is his Lordship going to leave Beechwood so soon.”

“ He has ordered his carriage, Sir,” answered the man, “ to be ready to-morrow at break of day.”

And so it was exactly as the man had said. For finding that Lady Emily, instead of listening favourably to his suit, gave him a firm denial when she found he really was in his sober senses, his Lordship determined to set off by break of day, determined to escape the awkwardness and mortification of taking a formal leave of a family, whom, after bitterly execrating for their want of taste and discernment, but especially her Ladyship, he vowed in his heart never to know again.

CHAP. XI.



CRITICAL INCIDENTS.



As in most great families, there are some domestics whose parents have been reduced by misfortunes, from easy circumstances to dependence, so it was the case with the female attendant of Lady Emily, whose name was Mansell. Her father had been a respectable tradesman; but by the treachery of one whom he first knew as a parish orphan, but whom he had apprenticed to himself, and afterwards taken as his partner in business, he had nearly lost his whole. With
the

the little that remained, he retired with his wife and children to a village a few miles from Beechwood, where he rented a small portion of land from Earl Altamont.

It happened one day, as Lady Meeresfield was passing through the village, that her carriage broke down; and as the accident took place close by Mr. Mansell's cottage, he was luckily on the spot to afford her assistance upon this occasion. Lady Meeresfield, after this, seldom passed through the village without looking in upon Mr. Mansell; for struck with his behaviour, and that of his wife, which seemed so much superior to their situation, she felt a desire to learn the story of two persons, whom she was well persuaded had known better days. When acquainted with the sad particulars of it, they became immediately in her eyes, objects of real compassion. Her feeling heart sympathized in all their domestic distresses;—in the disappointment of the flattering prospects they had once indulged;—in their toilsome
endea-

endeavours to conceal their poverty from the world;—in their anxieties about leaving their only child friendless and destitute at their death. As habits of active benevolence were united in that Lady, with the most amiable disposition, and without which, sensibility is nothing more than a selfish sort of luxury, she pictured the situation of Mr. Mansell in such forcible colours to her brother, that at her solicitation he fixed him in one of his small farms, stocked it, received no rent from him, and, in addition to this kindness, when his daughter was of a proper age, Lady Meeresfield placed her about the person of her niece, who treated her more like a companion than a servant. She was indeed as genteel in her manners as in her person; while her cheerful sweet temper rendered her no less a favorite of the whole household than of her mistress.

Now, a few days after Lord Pensington had left Beechwood, Mary Mansell had received a note from her father, to say, that her mother

was very unwell, and wished therefore she would ask Lady Emily's permission to let her come over to the farm the next morning. Upon being informed of this circumstance, Lady Emily not only gave leave, but desired her to take her own horse. Two hours had scarcely elapsed after Mary's departure, when her Ladyship, in returning from the Thornery, caught a glimpse of Charles, her maid, and one of the grooms slowly entering the court, which led to the stables. Almost doubting her senses, she hastened to her apartment, and desired word might be brought her, if her woman had not returned.

By this time, Mary had appeared before her, with a countenance as pale as death. "Oh! my Lady," said she, "I have been so terribly frightened since I left you, and am now all over in such a tremble at what is past, that I am scarcely able to speak or stand. Could you have seen what"—Here overpowered by her sensations, Mary

burst into tears, and sunk into a chair which was near her.

“ Compose yourself, my good girl,” said her Ladyship tenderly, giving her at the same time some hartshorn and water, which stood upon her toilette.

“ You are very kind, my Lady,” replied Mary, rising, after she had rested herself for a few minutes; “ but I am now much better; and will endeavour, as well as I can to tell you the cause of my sudden return. You know, my Lady, that, by your orders, I took William the groom with me. Now, upon getting about half way to my father’s, he asked me leave to drop a letter for one of his fellow servants at a cottage not far out of the road, assuring me that he would overtake me presently, if I would ride gently on. I did so. But scarce was he out of sight, when two men, or gentlemen, as they called themselves, passed me on horseback. Shortly afterwards, I heard the trampling of a horse; and on looking round to see if it was not
William,

William, I perceived those persons had turned their horses, and were trotting on towards me. Upon coming close to me, they stopped their horses, instead of passing and enquired whither I was going. I then directly thought by that question, my Lady, that they were highwaymen, and was pulling out my purse to give it them, when one of them, laughingly, said they were no robbers, although they meant to be ravishers of a few kisses; and the other directly answered, that they were lucky rogues to meet a pretty girl alone in so retired a road; and upon this he attempted to put his arm round my waist. Terrified beyond description at this attempt, I set off immediately on a gallop, screaming all the while, and they following me, using all sort of impertinent language. In this way I went on for upwards of a mile, when just as I had entered a frightful lane, who should I meet, my Lady, but Mr. Beauford; upon which, not the least thinking of the consequences that would happen, I imprudently

cried out, Oh! save me, save me, Sir! from these men. When, in an instant, my Lady, never shall I forget his looks, he laid his whip upon the shoulders of them both. Their astonishment, indeed, was not greater than mine at this action, so quickly was it done. Scoundrel, do you know who I am, said one of them. A villain, said Mr. Beauford; for none but a villain would have the heart to insult an unprotected female. At that moment, William came riding furiously towards us. The person who first spoke to Mr. Beauford, said, Where am I to hear of you. At Beechwood Court, and by the name of Beauford, was the answer. If I do not then wipe away the stigma you have cast upon me in your blood, said the same person, with a horrid oath, and his eyes flashing fire, I will give you leave to horsewhip me whenever you see me. And then, my Lady, he and his companion rode off directly. When Mr. Beauford, seeing I was almost ready to faint, and so fearful of meeting them again, rode by my
side

side all the way home, nor would he suffer me to say a word by way of thanking him; but in the kindest manner turned the conversation, by asking me about the health of my father and mother.—Indeed, indeed, Madam, I do not think the whole earth contains a more noble generous-hearted gentleman than Mr. Beauford.”

“ You have every reason to think so,” replied Lady Emily, struggling to conceal the agitation into which this story had thrown her.

“ What shall I say! Oh, my Lady, what must I do then,” said Mary, “ to save the life of my protector; since I am certain his will be taken away if something is not done to prevent this dreadful meeting. For, I have not told yet the worst of this affair.”

“ Let me have it,” replied her Ladyship, almost speechless with agony.

“ Why, Madam,” answered Mary, “ as soon as ever Mr. Beauford left me, William came up, and shaking his head, said, I am woefully afraid, that Mr. Lawson,
for

for that was he who told Mr. Beauford, he should hear from him, will do his business for him. For before I came into my Lord's service, I lived with Mr. Lawson, and he was accounted the best pistol shot in the whole county. And so he ought to be, for he was always shooting at a mark." Here Mary burst again into tears, at the thoughts of being the cause of exposing the life of Charles to such imminent danger. At this piece of intelligence, Lady Emily's spirits underwent so painful an emotion, that she could not utter a single word.

" Ah, my Lady," exclaimed Mary, who interpreted her silence into an unconcern for the fate of Charles, " if you knew how Mr. Beauford was adored by the whole household, if you knew the kind actions he had done to many of them, and how affable he was to all, you would then feel how very miserable I am at this moment.

" But I am afraid some one has prejudiced you against him, for I never hear you mention his name."

" Leave

“Leave me, leave me, Mary, for the present,” said her Ladyship, in a languid voice, and motioning her to begone.

The moment that Lady Emily was left to herself, she gave vent to the fulness of her sorrow for Charles's situation. Her first idea was, after she had in some degree recovered herself, to inform her father of his danger; but recollecting that the high spirit of Charles would render even his interposition unavailing, she at last determined, so forcibly did her imagination dwell on the horrors which would ensue if he met his antagonist, to speak to him herself upon the subject, under the pretence of telling him of the heart-struck wretchedness her servant felt at having involved him in this fatal quarrel. When she had once made up her mind to embrace this resolution, she was all impatience till she saw Charles. But unfortunately for her wishes, as soon as ever he had left her servant, he went to his own apartment, and did not make his appearance below stairs, either at dinner or any part
of

of the afternoon; for, in the expectation of receiving the challenge in a few hours, both duty and affection required that he should employ the interval of time in writing to his uncle and to his sister.

It was late in the evening when the challenge came, penned after the usual mode. As Charles was reading it, Oswald entered his room. "Hey dey, my dear fellow," said he, before he had taken a chair, "what ails you; have you got the megrims, or *les vapeurs noirs*, as the fine ladies term them? Upon honor, your absence at dinner damped my mirth and merriment as much as a wet blanket does a fire. And Lady Emily looked as melancholy as if you had been drowned or shot. *Apropos*, is it true what my man has been telling me, that you have got into a quarrel with Lawson, about her Ladyship's maid."

"By this note it appears so," answered Charles, and presenting it to him.

"Upon-my soul," replied Oswald, after he had glanced his eye over the note, and
heard

heard from Charles the particulars of their quarrel, "I am truly sorry you have received this message; for the chances, I am afraid, are very much against you."

"Why so," coolly asked Charles.

"Because," answered Oswald, "he is one of your first rate shots. He is one of those who can snuff a candle, and lodge his bullet in the centre of a crown piece at the distance of twelve paces."

"In other words," said Charles, "Mr. Lawson is a professed duellist. I am glad that you have communicated this fact to me; as it will materially alter the line of conduct which I meant to have adopted towards him. For it certainly was my intention, to have received the fire of Mr. Lawson without returning it, conceiving that my impetuosity of temper had hurried me into too summary a mode of proceeding towards him and his friend. But now that I understand the true character of my antagonist, I shall defend myself against him, though at the hazard and even certainty of perishing in
that

that defence. And depend upon it, that the man whose nerves are braced by that sort of courage which gives steadiness to the hand and to the eye, is quite on an equal footing in an affair of this kind with one who, because he has acquired the disgraceful skill of hitting a mark with unerring certainty, thinks he may insult with impunity unprotected modesty in whatever form he meets it."

"Well, said Oswald, "you are a noble fellow; and if you are in want of a friend upon this occasion, I am at your service; though I never before accompanied any one to the field."

"I accept your offer with thanks," replied Charles; "and if any fatal accident should happen to me, you will find in that escrutoire, letters to my sister and uncle, and certain papers of my Lord's, which I commit to your especial care. And now I will wish you a good night, as I have a few things to settle preparatory to this meeting. Should any one on your return to the drawing room, ask why I am absent, you will of course assign any
reason

reason but the real one. Now once more good night, and pray do not forget to be here precisely at eight o'clock to-morrow morning."

"Oh, rely upon it," said Oswald, as he shut the door, "I will be punctual to the time."

Prevented thus from having any conversation with Charles during the whole of the day, it may be easily imagined what a night of horror and anxiety the heiress of Beechwood had passed. When therefore,

"Uprose the sun, then uprose Emily,"

for thinking that the cool air of the morning would in some degree relieve that sort of feverishness which she felt from the want of sleep, she threw on her cloak and walked towards the Thornery. Charles had passed as restless a night as her Ladyship; and as soon as the morning light had dawned upon his windows, he rose from his bed, and dressed himself; and suspecting all
the

the family to be asleep, he felt an irresistible desire of once more visiting the Thornery. In entering the walk, which led to this romantic spot, Charles beheld a female figure moving towards him. He stopped for a few minutes, uncertain whether he should proceed. By this time the person had advanced so near, that he could distinctly recognise the features of Lady Emily. Both of them were so surprised at this meeting, that when they did join each other, they were quite silent for some moments. At length Charles broke silence, by saying, that he did not know her Ladyship was so early a riser. To this remark Lady Emily answered, without well knowing what she was saying, so intent was her thoughts upon Charles's perilous situation ; yet, by a strange inconsistency, now that she had got the opportunity, she so anxiously sought for, her delicacy almost persuaded her to abandon it. Another pause ensued, as they walked on, when Charles had again recourse to the beauties of nature.

“ The

“ The beauties of nature,” said her Ladyship, after Charles had been expatiating on them for some time, “ can impart but small pleasure when the mind is not at ease.”

“ Unquestionably,” answered he, totally unsuspecting to what she had hinted at.

“ I should be ashamed therefore,” added she, “ if I could contemplate yonder rural scenery with tranquil pleasure, when I think that one, whom my aunt so highly and so deservedly esteems, may be in a few hours no more, through the rash imprudence of my servant.”

“ Lady Emily,” said Charles, almost starting with astonishment.

“ Yes, Mr. Beauford,” replied her Ladyship, observing his emotion, “ it is to you that I allude. Nor can you be surprised that when my servant told me all that you have kept a profound secret, and when I saw her eyes overflowing with gratitude, and her heart almost bursting with the pangs of your anticipated death, I should so far sympathise
with

with her feelings as to beg that you will make an apology for the affront you have offered to Mr. Lawson and his friend."

"Oh," said Charles, in a soothing tone of voice, "affairs of this kind are by no means so frequently attended with those fatal consequences your maid seems to apprehend."

"You will then apologise," eagerly replied her Ladyship.

"If the affair can be accommodated in this way," answered Charles, "I shall have no hesitation in doing so."

"And if it cannot," said Lady Emily, with evident agitation, "What then follows—Why the loss of your life, and the peace and happiness of all those whose friendship, whose regard for you,"—Here, aware that she had let him see the weakness of her heart, she hesitated, and put her handkerchief to her face to conceal her blushes.

Touched to his inmost soul by this evident proof of her affection at such a moment, Charles fearing that if he staid any longer
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he should not be able to command his feelings, but should throw himself at her feet, and declare his passion, hastily uttered these impassioned words, "Adieu! loveliest and most amiable of thy sex."

"Stop, one moment, I conjure you," said Lady Emily, while the tears trembled in her eyes. "Tell me, is my happiness;— I mean that of your sister and uncle dear to you."

"So judge me, Heav'n," cried Charles with enthusiasm, and tenderly taking her hand, "I prize it beyond the choicest blessings which wealth or fame could bestow."

"Promise me then," said she, "that you will not meet these men."

"I cannot make such a promise," answered he; "for I cannot abate one scruple of my honor even for their sakes. All that I can faithfully promise is, that I will consider it my duty to feel more for my friends, upon this occasion, than for myself." At that moment one of the gardeners made his

his appearance at the bottom of the avenue in which they were, when Lady Emily falteringly said, "Farewell, remember me,"—and immediately they separated.

At the appointed hour, Oswald came to Charles, and in less than twenty minutes they had arrived at the place of rendezvous. In the mean time, Lady Emily's suspense was dreadful. For her maid having unluckily seen Charles's servant, and enquiring of him where his master was, learnt that he had just set off with Mr. Eaglehurst. Conceiving from this circumstance that the duel had already taken place, she entered her mistress's room, and unable to conceal this distressing intelligence, revealed it all to her Ladyship. The reader's fancy will take in more than our pen can describe what Lady Emily endured between the receiving of this intelligence, and the moment when she was acquainted with the issue of the duel. How often as she paced up and down her apartment, while her aching eye, her anxious ear, sought to catch the approaches

approaches of some who might bring tidings of Charles, did she apply to her own situation that equally just and beautiful remark of the poet,

“ With what a leaden and retarding weight,
“ Does Expectation load the wings of Time.”

At length, after an interval of two or three hours, Mary hurried into her room again, and almost breathless with joy, exclaimed, “ Oh, Madam, the duel is over, and Mr. Beauford is safe.”

“ Heav’n be praised,” fervently ejaculated Lady Emily, completely thrown off her guard in her transports of delight at this unexpected news. “ But when, and how did you hear this circumstance?”

“ Why, my Lady,” said Mary, “ as soon as ever I left your room, I went up into my own, which commands a very extensive view of the park; when after I had strained my eyes for near an hour, looking in every di-
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rection to see if Mr. Beauford was returning, I at last espied Mr. Eaglehurst galloping as fast as he could towards the house; upon which I immediately run to meet him, and, God be thanked, the first and only words he said to me, were, that Mr. Beauford was safe. And by this time, I durst say, madam, that Mr. Eaglehurst has returned from the stables, and entered the house."

With trembling steps, though with a more composed countenance, Lady Emily immediately descended from her apartment into the saloon, to hear the particulars of an occurrence which had so violently affected her. Upon entering, she started back with astonishment at the scene before her. For, in throwing open the door, she beheld Mrs. Eaglehurst bathed in tears, and Lady Meeresfield, and her father, in the most sympathising manner endeavouring to convince her of the unreasonableness of her apprehensions.

" Ah, my dear friend," said Mrs. Eaglehurst, as Lady Emily hastily approached

proached her, "have you heard the dreadful news?"

"No, my dear madam," answered her Ladyship, much agitated.

"Oswald, my beloved Oswald, is gone out to fight a duel with Mr. Lewson," said Mrs. Eaglehurst.

"Be comforted," quickly replied her Ladyship, "there must be some mistake in this, pray who told you so?"

"My maid," said Mrs. Eaglehurst, "who had the account from"—At that very instant Oswald entered the room.

"Oh, my dear Oswald," exclaimed his mother, running up to him and throwing her arms around his neck, "you have terrified me almost out of my senses. How could you be so rash as to get into a quarrel with a notorious duellist."

"What is the meaning of all this, my dear mother?" said Oswald.

"Why, have you not been exposing your life in a duel with Mr. Lewson?" asked Mrs. Eaglehurst.

“*Tout au contraire*—all in the wrong,” answered Oswald; “but sit you down and compose yourself, and you shall have every thing explained. Now, my Lord, as I am no orator, it follows, of course, that I should not attempt a long speech. The facts, however, I am to recite, are of too interesting a nature to make your Lordship or the rest of my auditors feel any disposition, to indulge in certain narcotic sensations. But without further preface, your Lordship is to know, that as Beauford was returning yesterday from Kenilworth, he met at the end of a lane Lady Emily’s maid on horseback, galloping and screaming as fast as she could, and Mr. Lawson and his friend following her. Upon an explanation taking place, it appeared that these gentlemen were mightily struck with the pretty face of her Ladyship’s attendant, insomuch, that they unluckily forgot, that a modest young woman was not an object formed for brutal insult, but for manly protection. Of this defect of memory, Beauford took the liberty of reminding

reminding them both by a horse-whipping; and as this mode of correction was far from being relished, your secretary, my Lord, was called to the field this morning by Mr. Lawson."

"How could *you* be so thoughtless to accompany him?" said Mrs. Eaglehurst, interrupting her son.

"Why mother," impatiently answered Oswald, "it will be a feather in my cap as long as I live, to have been the second of so brave a fellow. Accordingly, my Lord, as I was going to say, the parties met at the appointed time; when Mr. Lawson's friend, who, by the bye, was the very same whom Beauford had handled so roughly, said, 'as you understand each others minds, Mr. Beauford and Mr. Lawson, you have nothing now to do but to take your ground, without farther ceremony.' 'One question, sir,' said Charles to Mr. Lawson, 'and I am at your disposal. In what code of honor or humanity is it to be found, Mr. Lawson, that a man is entitled to insult a female and

to endanger her life, because she happens to be young, unprotected, and lowly born?' 'What then,' exclaimed Lewson, 'have I been struck for a waiting chamber-maid?' 'Yes, sir,' said Beauford, 'and he does not deserve the name of a man who can hesitate to support virtue, although he finds it in the garb of a servant. The great and the rich have friends ready enough, at all times, to get them out of their embarrassments; but it is not a sufficient cause for me to abandon a woman in her utmost need, merely on account of her humble situation; and the man who is base enough to do it, renounces at once, in my opinion, all those feelings which are amiable or respectable in the human character. 'Well, sir,' said Lawson, you talk this well, let us now see how you'll act it; for the utmost apology you can make, will not satisfy me: So prepare yourself.' Upon which Beauford, with as much coolness and grace as my Lord Hamlet begins his fencing bout, took his ground and fired his pistol."

“And the result,” said Lady Meeresfield eagerly.

“The result is,” answered Oswald, that “Beauford is slightly, and his antagonist severely wounded. Or, to borrow, my Lord, the technical phraseology of the surgeon, who I desired to be at hand in case of any accident, the ball of Charles passed between the sixth and seventh ribs, and striking the former went in a lateral direction through the *scapula* on the right side; while that of Lawson entered on the right side of the *sternum*, and passing under the integuments about four inches, made its exit, without doing any material injury.”

“And where have you left Beauford?” asked his Lordship.

“Oh, he is in very good hands,” replied Oswald, “at the house of one of your tenants, near which the duel took place. But I have not yet come to the catastrophe of my story.”

“Pray do then,” said Mrs. Eaglehurst,
in

in a peevish tone, "for your prosing is intolerable."

"The moment then, my Lord," continued Oswald, "that Lawson fell, Charles went up to him, at his request, when he stretched out his hand to him and said, 'I for the first time in my life, Mr. Beauford, feel the justness of the observation, that, "in a false cause, there is no true valour."' 'Would to heaven,' answered Beauford, 'that you had felt the truth of it before.' Then turning to Lawson's second, he said, 'Although wounded myself, I am yet able to receive and return your fire, if you do not acquiesce in the sentiment of your friend.' 'Upon my soul,' replied he, 'you have taught me a lesson, Mr. Beauford, which, I hope, I shall never forget as long as I live; and if you had not, I cannot raise my arm against you, having bound myself by a solemn promise to Lawson, after the lot had fallen upon him, not to call you out, whatever might be the result of this day's meeting.' Now, my Lord, as
I have

I have unfolded to you every circumstance of this critical adventure, I have only to beg your permission, after apologizing for that prolixity which seems so much to have annoyed my mother, to order one of your carriages to convey Beauford home."

"Oh, by all means," said his Lordship, rising, "and you will tell Beauford from me, as I am obliged to set off immediately to town, where I shall be detained on public business till the end of next week, that I sincerely hope to find him quite recovered on my return, and that every part of his conduct, in this affair, has my entire approbation; as it displays that true bravery, which is not more ashamed of insolence than of cowardice."

The carriage was then ordered, and the ladies separated to their respective apartments; Mrs. Eaglehurst quite angry with her son for having condescended to play the part of a herald to Charles's worth;—Lady Meeresfield, full of admiration at his conduct, and joy at his escape;—and Lady
Emily

Emily transcendantly happy to think, that she had bestowed her affections upon one, whom the world, with all its ill-nature, would have the candour to acknowledge, united with the merits and accomplishments, all the fine feelings and nice principles of the real gentleman.

CHAP. XII.



Hope ! Fortune's cheating lottery,
Where for one prize an hundred blanks there be ;
Fond Archer ! Hope ! who tak'st thy aim fo far,
That still or short, or wide, thine arrows are.
Thin empty cloud, which th'eye deceives,
With shapes that our own fancy gives.
A cloud which gilt and painted now appears,
But must drop presently in tears.
When thy false beams o'er Reason's light prevail
By *ignes fatui* for North stars we sail.

COWLEY.



Two days had elapsed, before Charles's wound, slight as the surgeon had pronounced it, allowed him the benefit of enjoying the
free

free air. The pleasure, however, of passing his evenings in the society of Lady Emily, for he was sufficiently recovered to make his appearance in the drawing room, quite compensated for that deprivation; since her Ladyship, now that she was firmly persuaded Charles returned her attachment, behaved to him with that engaging frankness and delicate attention, which rendered him, if possible, more enamoured than ever. This mutual passion was likewise fed by the turn which their conversation generally took in those *tête-à-têtes* that Charles contrived to draw her Ladyship into, whenever Mrs. Eaglehurst and Lady Meeresfield happened to be talking together.

One evening, after Charles had a long and interesting conversation with Lady Emily respecting his sister, and upon other subjects, in which he discovered that original sensibility in her taste which is alive to impressions, never conceived, much less felt, by the votaries of fashion, Mrs. Eaglehurst, quite out of patience with Oswald for not interrupting

interrupting this private conference, desired him, as he sat by her looking over the cassino table, to go to Lady Emily, and prevail on her to join the party. With a very ill grace he obeyed the mandate; for as he had no wish himself to become the husband of her Ladyship, so there was no one on earth whom he would have recognized with more pleasure in that character than Charles, as his affair with Lewson had made Charles a sort of hero in his eyes. So far then from wishing to put an end to their conversation, he felt every disposition on his part to contrive the means of keeping them together. Accordingly he went up to them and said, "My mother, Beauford, is apprehensive that you will over-exert yourself by talking, and therefore desires me, as physician in waiting, to prescribe some game for your amusement which imposes silence and attention."

"Come, then," replied Lady Emily, "as your physician thinks proper to interfere on this occasion, his directions must of course
be

be implicitly followed. I will, therefore, if you are disposed, match my good fortune against your superior skill at picquet."

"And I will wager any sum," answered Oswald, "that her Ladyship comes off the conqueror."

"I shall then be the more proud," said Charles, as they sat down to the table, "should I be the vanquisher of her, with whom so many would be eager to contend, not for victory, but for the honor of being selected as an opponent."

As soon as Charles had dealt out the cards, and her Ladyship surveyed her hand, "Why, Mr. Beauford," exclaimed she, "you will possess me with the spirit of a gamester if you give me such hands;—I leave three cards, for my unlucky stars have given me an easy victory over you the first deal."

"I shall still," replied Charles, "consider myself the favorite of fortune in being vanquished by such a charming adversary."

"Come,"

“Come,” rejoined Lady Emily, with a sweet expression of voice and manner, which shewed how much she was pleased with this speech, though she pretended not to notice it, “you shall now have proofs of my success—seven cards,” laying them on the table.”

“Good,” said Charles.

“Septieme major,—three aces, and three kings,” said Lady Emily.

“Good,” answered Charles.

“Sixty-one,” said Lady Emily, playing her first card—“Now, Mr. Beauford, if your heart is unguarded, I shall certainly *capot* you.—I wish I could peep into your hand, and see whether that provoking card was guarded.”

“Indeed,” replied Charles, “I must not prove my weakness by making any *confessions*.”

“Well,” said Lady Emily, “I trust my good fortune will not desert me at this important crisis;—now surrender your heart!”

It

It must fall to *you*, Lady Emily," said Charles.

"What! have I really won it, Mr. Beauford?" asked she.

"You have indeed," replied he.

At that instant his eyes met her's. When the sweet smile which she cast upon him, reached his soul at once, and agitated his whole frame with that delightful emotion, which is beyond the power of language to express. This little moment, short as it was blest, in which "silence spoke, and eloquence of eyes," as fully convinced each other of their mutual feelings, as if they had interchanged vows of unalterable attachment. While thus in all the enchantment of youthful love they looked at each other, and the meaning of the tender glance was explained by the conscious throbs of their bosoms, Mrs. Eaglehurst came up to them, and said, "We have need of you two at the casino table, so you must not attempt to excuse yourselves. Upon which they immediately rose; when, after Charles had
played

played a few games, he retired to his apartment.

It was late the next morning when Charles rose; and as his books had not those irresistible allurements for his mind which they possessed on his first coming to Beechwood, he experienced a secret pleasure in walking into the picture gallery, to contemplate the portrait of the sovereign of his affections. The likeness was very striking; and the grace and dignity of attitude and character which the artist had imparted to the whole figure were such, as might have justified the effects of admiration in a lover less ardent than Charles. While his eyes were rivetted on this picture, Mary entered the gallery, but he neither heard nor saw her till she had returned from the end of the room, with her Ladyship's peltisse, which she had left there.

As this was an opportunity which this grateful young woman had sought for in vain since Charles's recovery, of expressing the strong sense of obligation which she should

ever retain for his kindness, she went up to him and said, " I hope I do not disturb you, Mr. Beauford, but——" At the sound of his name Charles quite started, for so much had the picture engrossed his attention, that he was wholly unconscious of any person being near him. " I should think myself," proceeded Mary, " totally undeserving of your late protection, if I did not, after telling you, Sir, how highly delighted I am to see you look so well, humbly beg your forgiveness for having put your life in such great danger by my imprudence."

" Oh," said Charles, good naturedly, " if any person can find ought to censure in your conduct in that affair, believe me, he must view it with feelings very different from mine."

" How kind, Sir, is that opinion," answered Mary. " My Lady was not so indulgent to me."

" Indeed," rejoined Charles, affecting a look of surprise.

" Indeed,

“ Indeed, Sir, she was not,” replied Mary, “ though I should be the most ungrateful of girls, were I not to acknowledge my Lady’s general kindness, ever since I had the happiness of waiting on her. But on this occasion, she was most terribly displeas’d with me, and asked me, more than once, how I presumed to involve you in a quarrel on my account ; while she scolded me exceedingly for suffering the groom to leave me, as she said, that was the cause of the quarrel. And when I said, that I should be miserable all my life, if any serious accident happened to you, she was so angry with me as to answer, although she never gave me a cross word before, that she should be miserable all her life on account of my folly. The moment, however, I came to inform her Ladyship that you were safe, she threw up her beautiful eyes to heaven, with an expression, Sir, just like that in yonder picture,” pointing to a fine head of St. Cecilia, “ then directly afterwards bade me leave her in the kindest tone

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imaginable,

imaginable, and the very next day, Sir, she gave me a beautiful muslin gown."

"Well, Mary," said Charles, "I am happy you are restored to your lady's favor, and am sorry that you lost it, even for a day, on my account."

"I think myself quite fortunate, Sir," answered Mary, "that I did not lose it for ever, for I am sure my Lady felt as much for you, Sir, as if you had been her own brother. But I hear her Ladyship's bell ring;" and away she hurried, leaving Charles's heart filled with all those delightful sensations, which spring up from the pleasing recollection of the past, and the more joyous anticipation of the future.

It was one of those heavenly days, when, as Milton somewhere says, with all the glowing feelings of a poet, "it were an injury and sullenness against nature," not to go out and see her riches, that tempted Charles, the moment he had parted from Mary, to walk forth, and enjoy the beauties scattered over the grove, the lake, the lawn, with such
inexhaustible

inexhaustible profusion. Whilst gazing on the timid hind browsing in security, he observed Lady Meeresfield, Mrs. Eaglehurst, Lady Emily, and Oswald, coming out of the druidical temple, which had been placed, for ornamental purposes, on a lofty eminence. Oswald was the first who espied Charles; upon which he waved his hand for him to join them.

“Whom are you beckoning to,” said his mother.

“Why, don’t you see Beauford yonder?” replied he.

“Well, if it is,” answered she, “what do you want him here for?—You forget, Oswald, that your friend is a man of business as well as of fashion. Your interruptions to his thoughts may be, therefore, very ill-timed. Besides, you are not aware, how charming solitude may be to one of Mr. Beauford’s turn of mind.”

“Very true, mother,” rejoined he, “but as a certain writer says, we always want some
one

one to whom we may exclaim, how charming is solitude. If I know, however, any thing of his mind, I am quite certain he will prefer *our* company, here Oswald gave a sly look at Lady Emily, to the most entertaining of all his reveries. Though, upon second thoughts, it would be downright unmerciful in us to think of dragging him up this confounded steep ascent in his situation; so *allons donc, Mesdames*, if you wish to save him a walk nearly as uncomfortable to his body, as ever a march over the burning sands of Palestine was to the sons of chivalry in their close-cased armour." To this proposal Mrs. Eaglehurst made no objection, much as she heard it with inward displeasure, and Lady Meeresfield and her niece of course assented.

As Charles approached to meet them, he paused for a moment to contemplate Lady Emily's figure. Her complexion never looked more blooming, her countenance more expressive, or her eyes more lovely. And
while

while he gazed upon her with secret admiration, he could not help exclaiming to himself in the language of the poet,

“ Grace is in all her steps, heaven in her eye,
“ In every gesture dignity and love.”

When Oswald came up to Charles, “ My mother,” said he, “ was sadly afraid that you were puzzling your head upon political matters, and would fain had us turn another way, or, to use a more fashionable phrase, *cut you*. But if I have not lost my usual discernment, I can now distinguish in that face of thine, an expression not very like chagrin or disappointment at this rencontre.

“ My looks then,” replied Charles, “ declare what I exactly feel on this occasion.”

The party then walked on together, alternately conversing one with another till they came to a large oak, which spread its picturesque branches over the stream that glided through

through the pleasure grounds. Here they stopped for a while, and seated themselves under its shade; for the sun was now in its meridian splendour, and scarce a wave or ripple was to be seen on the water. When Lady Emily, advancing to the bank side, asked Oswald, if he had ever seen a more beautiful *lilium aquarium* than that which was near them.

“A what?” said Oswald.

“Oh you are no botanist, I perceive,” rejoined she.

“Not I,” answered he. “I am almost as ignorant as a baby about the classification of plants. All I know is, that yonder rose has an undoubted right to be styled the queen of flowers, as you have to be called the queen of beauty.”

“Why, Oswald,” replied her Ladyship, laughing, “the country air seems to have had quite an inspiring effect upon your imagination this morning. It is a pity, is it not, Mr. Beauford,” who stood close enough to her to hear this compliment, “that he
does

does not always reside in the country, since it can produce such fine speeches from him."

Her Ladyship then sauntered on a few paces further, when, turning to Charles, "look there, Mr. Beauford," said she, "I think that water lilly is still more beautiful than the last. How I should like to get at it."

"Oh, that can be easily done with my stick," replied Charles, eager to oblige her. So saying, he hastily advanced to the water's edge; when, in an instant, as it were by a stroke of magic, the bank sunk in, and Charles was out of sight. Lady Emily gave a piercing shriek, and directly fell senseless on the ground. Charles, however, who was an expert swimmer, as we have shewn before, soon recovered from the shock of this unexpected accident, and was presently again on his legs. Whilst he was extricating himself from his danger, Mrs. Eaglehurst had hurried on, by her son's desire, to the house, to procure the necessary relief for her Ladyship.

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In the mean time she had recovered from her fit of fainting; but recollection had not so thoroughly returned, as to give her a distinct impression of what had just happened. As she lay in this state, her head supported by Lady Meeresfield, Charles came just in view, as she opened her eyes, and uttered these words, "Oh my Beauford, I shall never see you more."

The exquisite delight which Charles felt at hearing this exclamation, suspended for a moment every faculty of his mind and body. While Lady Meeresfield's astonishment was, if possible, greater than Charles's, at the words which had escaped. She had sufficient presence of mind, however, to reflect, that if Charles remained with her, his feelings might hurry him to take an advantage of her niece's confusion. She therefore said to him, while he seemed quite fascinated to the spot, "Pray hasten home, Beauford, immediately, and change your clothes; for if you linger here any longer, I am sure you will take cold in your situation." Charles was too quick-sighted

sighted not to understand this hint, he therefore, though much against his inclination, retired. In his way, he met Mrs. Eaglehurst, and Mary with her hands filled with all sorts of restoratives.

“How is Lady Emily?” exclaimed Mrs. Eaglehurst, with a face of terror; “and you I hope are quite well.”

“Oh, perfectly so,” said Charles, “but don’t let me detain you for a moment, as her Ladyship may need your assistance.”

“And pray, Sir,” said Mary, “take off your wet clothes as soon as possible, or else you’ll catch a terrible cold.” Could she have known the unspeakable happiness which he felt at that moment, her fears on that head would have been quite groundless; for Charles’s mind being so completely occupied with one idea, did not allow him time to apprehend, and therefore, to receive any injury to his bodily health from this accident.

By the time that Mrs. Eaglehurst and Mary had joined Lady Emily, she was

so far recovered, as to be able to stand ; and though very weak still, contrived, by the assistance of Oswald's arm, to walk to the house. She was, however, so fatigued on reaching her apartment, and so oppressed by different emotions, as to require being immediately put to bed, where she remained for some hours.

In the course of the evening, Mrs. Eaglehurst looked in upon her Ladyship, and found her up and taking coffee in her *boudoir*. With much apparent kindness she expressed her joy at seeing her look so well after her fright, and laughingly told her, that she was come to be her nurse, while her aunt remained in the drawing-room. But the real object of this visit was, to endeavour, by that ingenuity of which she was mistress, to draw her Ladyship into a discourse respecting Charles, in order that she might discover how far there was a warrant for those suspicions which she began again to entertain, of a secret attachment lurking at the bottom of her heart for him. For it
may

may be easily supposed, that the reserve which her Ladyship had laid aside to Charles ever since the ball, and their increasing intimacy after the duel, had not escaped the watchful eyes of Mrs. Eaglehurst. Indeed, if her silly belief of the matchless attractions of Oswald had not completely blinded her usual good discernment, the very circumstance of Lady Emily's fainting at Charles's accident, would have put her doubts to rest upon this subject. But as it was, that occurrence did not give to Mrs. Eaglehurst a sufficiently clear view of the real movements of her Ladyship's heart.

Accordingly, like a skilful engineer, she opened her trenches of attack, as soon as ever Mary had quitted the room, by a long and elaborate panegyric upon Charles. Yet this stratagem, though cunningly devised, did not succeed in throwing Lady Emily off her guard. For though she had not the slightest idea of Mrs. Eaglehurst's design to scrutinize her conduct, yet as she felt an insuperable objection, intimate as they were, ever to
make

make her a confidante upon this occasion, she so contrived to shape her answers, that while she lent a willing ear to the praise of Charles,

“She said no more than just the thing she ought.”

Determined, however, to bring this matter to a still stronger test, and thus to be completely freed from doubt or hesitation, as to the truth of her suspicions, Mrs. Eaglehurst, heaving a deep sigh, said, “For my part, I do not know any event which would affect me with deeper concern, than the untimely death of one, in whom every accomplishment of mind and person is so abundantly found.”

“My dear Mrs. Eaglehurst,” replied Lady Emily, with visible emotion, “what are you talking about?”

“I beg your pardon,” answered she, “for letting my thoughts take so melancholy a turn. But I was thinking,”—here she pretended to check herself.

“What?”

“What? my dear Madam,” eagerly asked Lady Emily.

“That if any thing fatal should happen to Beauford,” continued she, perceiving that the hint had taken effect, “in consequence of the cold shivering, which, I understand from my son, seized him about an hour ago, how great would be the sufferings of his uncle and his sister.”

“Great, past compute,” quickly answered Lady Emily; “I will therefore send immediately to Dr. R.” rising to pull the bell.

“Would that be quite consistent with your notions of propriety?” asked Mrs. Eaglehurst.

“Oh, to save so inestimable a life,” hastily replied her Ladyship, entirely forgetting her caution, “one ought not to stand upon the nice punctilios of etiquette.”

“Very true, my dear,” said Mrs. Eaglehurst, “I will therefore immediately see myself what is to be done in this alarming case,” retiring with some degree of precipitation, being apprehensive, if she stayed any longer

longer, of betraying the feelings of indignation and wrath, with which her heart was almost ready to burst, at the incontestible proof of attachment her Ladyship had just evinced to Charles.

The moment Mrs. Eaglehurst was gone, Lady Emily flung herself on a couch, and gave way to her grief for a considerable time. Having at length composed herself, she rung for Mary, and though not doubting in the least that Mrs. Eaglehurst was sensibly alive to the emotions of friendship, and would, therefore, do all in her power to induce Charles to pay a proper attention to his health, yet, as her mind was worked up to the highest pitch of anxiety, by this report of Mrs. Eaglehurst, she could not resist the impulse of sending her woman with a message from herself to say, that she begged he would take all possible care of his health ; as she should never know comfort again, if any accident, from his fall into the water, should happen to him, on account of the occasion upon which he had received it. This message,

sage, Mary carried to Charles the very same evening; and though she uttered not a syllable more than her instructions, yet, it was not without difficulty that he could smother his joy in her presence, or keep down that elevation of hope, with which this unlooked for communication so naturally inspired him.

CHAP. XIII.

To feign a red-hot zeal for freedom's cause,
To mouth aloud for liberties and laws,
For public good to bellow all abroad,
Serves well the purposes of private fraud.

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.....

Majors and minors differ but in name,
Patriots and ministers are much the same ;
The only difference after all their rout,
Is, that the one is in, the other out.

CHURCHILL.

Opiniators naturally differ
From other men ; as wooden legs are stiffer
Than those of pliant joints to yield and bow,
Which way soe'er they are designed to go.

BUTLER.

~~~~~

AT an early hour the next day, Earl Al-  
mont returned from town, accompanied by  
Mr. Featherweight, whose late absence from  
Beechwood, had been as unavoidable, as  
it



it was a matter of serious regret to him ; for however highly he thought of himself, he could not shut his eyes to the attractions of Charles, nor affect to view him as a rival beneath his notice, should he presume to aspire to the hand of Lady Emily. In the mean while, Mrs. Eaglehurst was so much exasperated at her Ladyship's conduct, that her first intentions were to inform my Lord, as soon as he arrived, of the unhappy attachment she was convinced his daughter harboured in her bosom for his Secretary. But, upon maturer reflexion, she was convinced of the impolicy of adopting at present this decisive measure ; for, though she wanted no further evidence of Lady Emily's partiality than that she had already received ; and though no Lady was more ready than herself to step aside from the path of justice to advance her own interests, or to consider her worst actions as the involuntary effect of fatal necessity, yet even she could not reconcile it to her conscience to blast the prospects of Charles, without first having

an equally irrefragable proof of his attempts to thwart the darling passion of her soul. Besides, the obvious truth did sometimes occur to her, but then it came like those coruscations in a dark night, which are seen for a moment, and disappear the next, that the possession of Lady Emily's affections would not in the least add to the happiness of her son's future life in his estimation;—but then this supposition was no sooner entertained, than rejected as most fantastic and chimerical. Mrs. Eaglehurst therefore deemed it the most prudent course on this occasion to assume the same tone of affection to Lady Emily as before, carefully to avoid saying any thing which might offend or irritate her, respecting Charles, but to sift to the bottom all his views in this affair, and then, if she found the force of her attachment excite corresponding sentiments in him, to expose at once, his excessive presumption, and thus to separate them for ever.

But

But all these resolutions were put to flight by a circumstance, as new as alarming; which shewed her how wholly inadmissible her son's pretensions were to the hand of Lady Emily, in the mind of my Lord, and therefore to what little purpose she had been bartering her probity for her interest. Since the moment the Earl met her, he drew her apart; and said, "I have news to tell you, cousin Eaglehurst, which, as I know you love my daughter with an almost maternal affection, will give you infinite pleasure to hear. The duke of Glassonbury, whose father, you may remember, was one of my intimate friends, is just returned from his travels; and I find him to be a young man of great promise and accomplishment. Unlike those spoiled youths of condition, who visit the Continent and return to their country full of fopperies and follies; the Duke has acquired in their place, politeness, taste, and literature, and while he has shaken off several national prejudices, he has not substituted for them an affected contempt of the institutions and manners  
among

among which he was bred. Added to which, his fortune is suited to his birth, his figure elegant, and his physiognomy such, as I should think, would captivate any Lady who had not unalterably placed her affections upon another. Now, in the course of a few days, the Duke will pay me a visit, and if I am not too much led away by the natural partiality of a father, I have every reason to hope he will not be insensible to the beauty and merits of Emily. This then, I will freely acknowledge to you, is an alliance which, whether I look to the high rank of this young man, his personal character, or his political connections, is every way desirable for the heiress of the house of Altamont."

At first, Mrs. Eaglehurst was knocked down by the thunderbolt. Yet, full of consternation as she was, in meeting so unlooked for an obstacle to a scheme which she had so long and so impatiently desired, Hope whispered to her, that as his Lordship's dream was not yet realized, the prospect of Oswald's success with Lady Emily, if judicious

cious means were employed, might be rendered as fair and encouraging as before. She therefore presently dressed up her countenance with the smiles of complacency at this communication, and assured his Lordship that nothing should be wanting on her part to accomplish a project which he seemed to have so much at heart. This intelligence, however, so completely discomposed her, that in spite of her wishes to assume an appearance of unusual high spirits before his Lordship, she was quite unable to accompany him and his family to a splendid feast which was to be given to them that day by Sir Christopher Martman. But not till the carriages drew up to take them, (the better to conceal the real cause) did she desire Oswald to make her apologies to Lady Martman for her absence, on the pretext of sudden indisposition.

A very large party had been assembled to meet my Lord upon this occasion, as it was the first visit of this kind that he or his family had paid to Sir Jacob. The servants therefore

had

had new dress liveries, by the desire of her Ladyship, while the bill of fare, which the cook had been obliged to draw out, shewed that his Master was one of those who considered elegance of arrangement at a dinner, less a perfection than substantial plenty. The whole table groaned, or rather sunk beneath the weight of the Baronet's hospitality; so much so, that Oswald, who happened to be seated near Charles, could not hold whispering into his ear,

“ Is this a dinner, this a genial room,

“ This is a temple, and a hecatomb.”

“ Why, Mark Antony, who roasted eight whole boars at an entertainment, as I remember to have read in some book at school, never butchered more at a meal than our host has done.”

“ This entertainment, certainly,” said Charles, smiling, “ would afford a very fair scope for invective to the advocates of the Pythagorean or Brahmanical systems.”

“ It

“ It is enough,” replied Oswald, “ to make me abstain from the criminality of eating animal food for some months to come.”

The dinner, however, went off quite to the satisfaction of the Baronet; and as the conversation was then general, he said or did nothing to expose himself to the derision of his guests. Another circumstance, which served to put Sir Christopher in high good humour, was, the pleasure his Lordship affected to receive from his attentions; and the occasional compliments the Earl paid to him on his liberal hospitality, which he said reminded him forcibly of that of his ancestors, but which would now be viewed only as wasteful expence and prodigality.

Soon after dinner, the Ladies retired; not that the Gentlemen were unwilling to converse with them, but that Sir Christopher was impatient to get rid of them. “ Now, my Lord,” said the Baronet, the moment they had withdrawn, “ I give you another proof of my love of old English customs.”

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“ In what, Sir Jacob,” asked the Earl.

“ Why,” rejoined he, “ in wishing the women to depart half an hour after dinner ; for though no man is more happy than myself in the society of the fair sex, or more delights in the *badinage*, the *persiflage*, or the *double entendre* ;” here the Baronet laid a particular stress upon these words, being very fond of introducing scraps of the French language, to shew his good breeding ; “ yet, as I am a great stickler for the customs of my country, especially the more old fashioned they are, I can, therefore, very readily dispense with the presence of the Ladies on occasions of this kind.”

To all this silly talk, my Lord seemingly gave a cordial assent ; indeed, had his host uttered still more ridiculous nonsense, he would have met with no contradiction from him. For, it was one of this nobleman’s maxims ; never to refuse to say yes, when truth and sincerity required him to answer no, if by so doing he could accomplish any very important purpose. Now it happened,  
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that the Earl was very desirous of attaching Sir Christopher entirely to his political interests at this period. For the object of his Lordship's late visit to town, had not only been completely frustrated, but his pride had been galled to a degree, that left him in a state of incurable exasperation. A ribband had lately become vacant; of which the Premier was well aware his Lordship expected to have the offer; but which, under the plea of gaining a powerful auxiliary to his cause, he had given to one who had till then figured away in the ranks of opposition. The consequence of this affront was, what the minister might have easily foreseen had he known the real character of his colleague, that he determined to throw the whole weight of his influence into the opposite scale. Having this design, the direction of Sir Christopher's vote in parliament became of more importance than ever.

Thinking too the present opportunity no unfavorable one, when several of the leading gentlemen of the county were present, to drop

drop some expressions, whence they might collect his intentions of deserting his colours, or in other words, seceding from administration; the moment therefore that Sir Jacob had bumpered Church and State, for toasts he affirmed to be another essential appendage to a *repas à-la-mode d'Angleterre*; the Earl instantly observed, in allusion to that sentiment, that the alliance between those powers had now become so close, that if the former is but slightly attacked, there could not be a more hideous outcry made, than if her very foundations were going to be demolished. "For my part," continued his Lordship, "notwithstanding the famous book of the mitred sophist Warburton, upon this system, I am decidedly of opinion, that the converting of the Church into an engine or an ally of the State, has only served still more to debase the institution, and to pave the way for further corruptions and abuses in it, when there are enough already to make every pious man to shudder at."

The astonishment which seized Dr. Gleb-  
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more at these remarks, cannot easily be described. Twice he shook himself and rubbed his forehead, like a man just awakened from a frightful dream, for not having the most distant suspicion of his Patron's design to throw himself into the arms of the opposition, and well knowing how the Earl had distinguished himself upon former occasions, as a supporter of the establishment, insomuch that he had set him down as even attached to the high church party, he was utterly at a loss to trace the cause of this alteration in his language: but, as this reverend person was on the look out for some good temporalities in his Lordship's gift, sorely as he felt this attack upon his profession, he thought it most prudent to hold his tongue. This however was not the only bye-blow which the Doctor was obliged to receive, without venturing to return it. For the moment my Lord had finished speaking, Mr. Featherweight, being apprized by the Earl, in the course of their journey to Beechwood, of his design to enlist himself under  
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the banners of the Opposition ; but ignorant of the true motive which impelled him to that determination; the loss of the ribband, directly exclaimed, “ That if the welfare of the Church were so peculiarly dear to the State, she, in her turn, was always abundantly grateful for it, though she had too often shewn her gratitude at the expence of the liberties of the people ; witness the odious doctrine of the divine right of kings, and of unlimited obedience due from the subject. These are black spots, Doctor,” added he, “ upon the purity of your order, and justify the charge which has so often been in the mouths of the haters of bigots and time-serving persons, that the arrogance and tyrannous oppression of our latter princes have been entirely owing to the slavish doctrines of the Clergy.”

“ And yet some plausible reasons, I think,” replied Charles, “ might be urged in extenuation of their conduct.”

“ I shall be exceedingly happy to hear them,” replied Mr. Featherweight, “ though  
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from the discreet silence which the Doctor maintains upon this subject, I must be permitted to doubt even if the abilities of Mr. Beauford can throw any new light upon this subject."

"I cannot, however, help thinking," said the prudent divine, eager to shift the defence of the clergy upon the shoulders of Charles, in order thereby to escape the danger of saying any thing displeasing to his patron, "that the ingenuity of Mr. Beauford will not be unsuccessfully employed on this occasion."

This compliment Charles heard with as much indifference as he viewed the character of him who paid it with contempt. It was not therefore from any sort of liking to the Doctor that he prepared to advocate his cause, nor can it be supposed that he undertook his defence for the purpose of provoking a discussion with his Lordship, of whose change in politics he was perfectly ignorant, having held no private conversation with him since his return;—it was solely  
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then undertaken to punish Featherweight, whose uniform haughtiness of deportment to him justified his resentment. Instigated therefore by this personal motive, for our readers must remember that we have never delineated Charles as a faultless mortal, in whom no frailty or imperfection might be detected, he answered in reply to Featherweight's last observation, "that although it was not possible to justify or apologize for the pernicious tendency of the doctrines alluded to by Mr. Featherweight, yet I will venture to contend that no one who understood any thing of human nature, or who knew any thing of the grounds upon which those doctrines were embraced, and for what purposes they were maintained by the Clergy, would have brought his charge against them with such unsparing severity and vindictiveness as he has done."

"*En vérité,*" replied Mr. Featherweight, with a sarcastic sneer, "the Church ought to be exceedingly obliged to you in stepping forth to prove all our deeply settled notions

notions connected with the topics just now mentioned, quite groundless and romantic."

" I take the Gentleman's compliment as he means it," answered Charles ; " but even that won't deter me from stating what I have to say, after my own manner, without being in the smallest degree anxious what reception my opinions may meet with from Mr. Featherweight, well knowing, that if I get beyond my depth, my Lord will have the goodness to set me upon *terra firmâ* again."

" I am all attention, Beauford," said his Lordship, politely, " to see how you will extricate yourself from this puzzling scrape ; for really I must consider it as such, when you advance the position that we are not to look to the clergy as the instruments of exalting the royal prerogative to a pitch of despotism in the reigns of the house of Tudor and of Stuart."

" I did not understand, my Lord," said a gentleman who sat opposite to him, " that

Mr. Beauford attempted to deny that charge ; he only affirmed that it was first indispensable to ascertain the principles upon which the Clergy lent their sanction to the arbitrary views of the monarchs of those times, in order that we might not judge of them quite so harshly as Mr. Featherweight has done."

"That, my Lord," said Charles, "was precisely my conclusion. And if I occupy too long the attention of the company in explaining those principles, I must throw myself upon their good nature for my pardon. You know, my Lord, that when Henry VIII. stedfastly persisted in his bold measures, of rendering himself independent of the Pope, by declaring himself head of the church, the usurpation of such authority, as it was then the fashion so to term it at Rome, rendered him so odious to the Catholic world, that they gave full vent to their feelings of indignation, and declared him guilty of a crime which ought to subject him to the most severe and exemplary punishment.



And when afterwards he proceeded to reject the doctrines of the Romish church, the thunders of the vatican were hurled against him; while the sentence of deposition was actually put into execution against Elizabeth. This act of the pope, however, was regarded as such a monstrous stretch of power, and so disgusted every Catholic prince in Europe, that none of them would refuse to recognize and to treat with her as a legitimate sovereign. In order therefore to throw a veil over that act, or rather to extenuate the unpopularity of it, and to undermine what they perceived could not be openly attacked without exciting a general aversion, the Jesuits began to investigate the origin of civil power, which they properly derived from the people; but for the artful and detestable purpose of shewing, that as kings did not reign by a divine right, but merely by the suffrages of the people, the subjects of heretical princes ought not to dispute the vicar of Christ's temporal, no more than spiritual supremacy, and his consequent

right to interfere in the civil concerns of all kingdoms. To counteract the mischievous operation of this principle, which aimed such a deadly wound at the authority of kings, and which tended to justify any one acting the part of an assassin towards an uncatholic sovereign, the protestant divines went to the contrary extreme; and, to shield the person of their monarch from any such attacks, preached up the doctrines of divine right. All but Hooker, whose comprehensive, upright, and elevated mind enabled him to keep aloof from the religious prejudices and clamours of the times, and still to pursue the footsteps of truth. Thus unhappily arose in the church of England, that execrable system of the pretended divine right to the inheritance of the crown, which had its origin undoubtedly in the clergy, but not for the base and unworthy purposes which the bitter malice of their enemies have ascribed to them."

Here a short pause ensued, when the Doctor plucked up courage enough to say,  
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“The able elucidation which you have given of this subject, Mr. Beauford, I should hope would induce even Mr. Featherweight to think a little more charitably of those of my profession. And, as a further reason for that system just mentioned, taking so firm a hold of the minds of the clergy, you might have alleged, Mr. Beauford, the submission which the gospel enjoins to the sovereign authority in that emphatic sentence, “Let every soul be subject to the higher powers.”

“Certainly,” replied Charles, “there is nothing to be found in Holy Scriptures more clear, imperative, or unequivocal, than that precept, and therefore it is not to be doubted that it powerfully contributed to mislead, perplex and disturb, as it still continues to do the judgments of many. Nevertheless, the doctrines of divine right and passive obedience must have inevitably fallen to the ground, after they had been exposed and reprobated for upwards of twenty years before the Restoration, in so many eloquent and popular publications, but for a very un-  
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toward circumstance, which was closely connected with the progress of the Reformation; I allude to the conduct of the puritanical leaders, who adopted the principles of the jesuitical party, less from a liberal spirit of patriotism and impatience of civil oppression, than from the hope of covering under them their deep-laid attacks upon the legal rights and established prerogative of the crown. Under such circumstances then, it ought not to excite our surprise, if principles true in themselves, but perverted to the worst of purposes, were not seconded by the voice of the nation."

"Well," said the Earl, eager to give the company another hint of his intention to throw off the trappings of official greatness and start up a furious whig, and likewise determined to shew Charles, that if he wished to enjoy the continuance of his personal favor, he must implicitly acquiesce in his political creed "it appears Beauford, that you have now finished your sophisticated arguments in behalf of the doctrines introduced

duced by the slavish divines in the reign of Henry VIII, and propagated with such zeal in the days of Elizabeth, James the first, and his successor;—doctrines which, if the glorious Revolution of 1688 had not taken place, would have finally subverted the great fabric of civil liberty raised by the hands of our forefathers.—Depend upon it, gentlemen, had the clergy never broached those doctrines, of which language does not afford us sufficient terms to express our indignation, we should have been at a loss to discover any truth in that memorable saying of the celebrated Lord Rochester, “ that the aspiring, he had observed at court of some of the clergy, with the servile ways they took to attain to preferment, had made him often think they suspected the things were not true which, in their sermons and discourses they earnestly recommended.”

“ For my part,” said Mr. Featherweight, taking it for granted, that this speech of my Lord’s had completely over-awed Charles, and disposed to do all in his power to humble him,

him, " I should be almost as much surprised if any one could be so imposed upon by the false piece of reasoning which we have just heard from Mr. Beauford, as to think the clergy less worthy of reprobation than before, as I should to hear it affirmed, that we were indebted to the clergy for their support of our civil liberties prior to the Revolution."

Although it was obvious to Charles that he had already incurred the displeasure of his Lordship by what he had said, yet rather than have endured the insolent airs of superiority, which Mr. Featherweight assumed, and have forborne to repay with retorted scorn and resentment, the repulsive contempt which Mr. Featherweight had treated him with, he would have sacrificed with pleasure, such was his disposition, the most dazzling prospects of advancement which Earl Altamont could have opened to his view. He therefore immediately answered, " Your memory, Sir, must be short, or your researches not very deep, else you could not have been ignorant that  
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the clergy stood forth as the champions of our civil liberties in the reign of the Conqueror."

"What strange paradox are you now about to give us," said Mr. Featherweight, carelessly taking a pinch of snuff, and affecting the utmost composure of manner, while his countenance gave evident proof how nettled he was by this last observation of Charles.

"I was only going to observe for *your information*," replied Charles, in a tone of perfect calmness, "that when the Conqueror issued a rescript for the bishops and sheriffs to have in future separate courts and separate judicatures, in order to get the civil courts solely administered by his tools the Norman lawyers, who would then have made the laws speak in exact conformity to the arbitrary wishes of their king, the churchmen to defeat a project which was intended to sweep away at once the Saxon code, the great and only palladium of their country's liberties, and in which they were confessedly  
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more skilled than any other body of men, did therefore turn common lawyers; and this expedient so well succeeded, that in the next reign almost all the clergy became professors of the common law, as we may gather from that well-known expression of the historian, *Nullus clericus nisi causidicus*. Perhaps the acute casuist may here observe, that the main-spring of their activity and vigilance was the interests of the church, as much as it was in their promoting the Revolution. But I cannot think that the motives for public bodies, in bringing about any good, ought to be scrutinized so nicely as those of individuals. I shall ever therefore contend, that the clergy for having acted as they did in those two memorable instances, granting even their primary object was the church, have deserved well of their country." Here my Lord appeared to be overtaken by one of his lethargic fits.

"Well, Mr. Featherweight," said the Baronet, "we have all reason to rejoice that we did not live in those times, when the liberty of  
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of the subject was put in such jeopardy by the bawling of the sycophants of the crown about the divine right of kings, the dispensing power of kings, the high commission court, the star-chamber court, and I don't know how many other courts, all nearly as bad as the inquisition itself."

"We may indeed," said Mr. Featherweight, "be all thankful to Providence for casting our births after the epoch of the Revolution."

"Truly we may," exclaimed a gentleman who sat by the side of Mr. Featherweight, "for who knows if the expulsion of James II. had not taken place, but what all of us here, instead of canvassing, the slavish doctrines of the clergy, might now be kneeling at the shrine of some such saint as Thomas à Becket, through the abject superstition of that prince, who as much believed in the infallibility of the pope, as his name-sake did in the existence of witches, and in the horns and tail of the devil."

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Now here was another opening for my Lord to shew the company the new game of politics he was going to play, and of which he availed himself with his usual dexterity. Pretending gradually to awake as the conversation turned upon the Revolution, he exclaimed in a tone of voice sufficiently loud to arrest the attention of all present, " Yes, gentlemen, and while we remember with gratitude the capital columns of British liberty, reared by the glorious patriots of the Revolution, don't let us forget, when talking of monarchs, to cherish the memory of William the third, with sentiments of fond veneration. Other princes may have surpassed him in military exploits, and political capacity. But the man whose virtues ought to be engraven on the head and heart of every Englishman, for having conferred the most essential benefits upon his country, as well as Europe at large, is, beyond the shadow of doubt, William the third. For had not his great heart been deeply impressed with the conviction, that  
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kings were instituted only for the good of those over whom they preside; had not this been the predominant feeling of his life, it is more than conjectural, that this country would have now worn the fetters both of civil and ecclesiastical servitude. None will deny the truth of this observation, when they are reminded of the colossal power which France had then grown to, under Louis XIV. and of the systematic attempts of that ambitious potentate to subjugate the whole Continent to his will. I say then, gentlemen, had it not been for the single exertions of the magnanimous William, the Protestant interest would have, in all likelihood, been annihilated, and we had been a nation of slaves instead of freemen. Thanks, however, be to God, the heroic spirit of that Prince, after a series of struggles, at last surmounted all these terrible dangers and evils; and so completely changed the face of Europe, that the sacred name of liberty, by his unwearied and undaunted efforts, began at last to be heard in other countries, and would have reached,

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in all probability, but for the French Revolution, to the uttermost corners of the earth."

This animated speech was highly admired by all present, especially by Charles, who little thought, any more than the rest of his Lordship's auditors, that what they had applauded as an extemporary effusion, had taken the deliverer of it some hours to produce; still less did it enter into their imaginations, that the Earl had touched before upon the Revolution, solely for no other purpose but of introducing this speech at a proper time and place.

Here Mr. Featherweight continued the subject by saying, "And among the civil blessings which the Revolution has imparted to us, I think, my Lord, that may be reckoned no inconsiderable one, which renders it impossible now for an artful and base-minded man to succeed, by a forced and unnatural interpretation of some few detached texts of scripture, in teaching the people the necessity of a slavish non-resistance to such as are inclined

clined to the establishment of an arbitrary system of government. Nobody is now foolish enough," looking at Charles, "to talk about the divine right of kings; I say," added Mr. Featherweight, with great vehemence, perceiving Charles smiled, "the man who can pretend to say, that our kings reign by a divine right, does not deserve the freedom of the British constitution."

"If I know myself at all," replied Charles, "there exists not a being who can admire more enthusiastically than I do that noble sentiment in Homer, that the day which makes one a slave, takes away one half of our manly virtue. Yet, although I am as thankful as Mr. Featherweight for being born in this country, after the great epoch of the Revolution, which prescribed the limits of prerogative, and ascertained the rights and liberties of the subject, in the famous act of settlement, and until which period, much as the government has been extolled by foreign writers as a master-piece of modern policy, was

was little better than one violent scene of contention between the king and the people, about prerogative and privilege, I must, nevertheless, presume to think and to say, that the princes of the Brunswick line still reign by divine right."

"Come Beauford," said the Earl, with a wish to throw an air of ridicule upon what Charles was about to say, "you have given us one ingenious paradox in the course of the evening; but you must recollect that *toujours chapon bouilli* will not do. Why you may as well contend that the crown cannot be deemed absolutely hereditary, because in the oath to government there is a proviso that the heirs be Protestants, and because the word heirs is not now made use of; or affirm, that the great ends of the Revolution have been defeated, because the clause of the act of settlement, which excluded all persons who enjoyed any places of profit or pension under the crown, has been in effect abrogated by the clause of re-elections in the reign of  
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Queen Anne ;—I say, you may as well pretend to assert either of these extravagant positions, as to declare, that our monarchs now reign by divine right, when you know that our constitution by the revolution, became a written compact. But I suppose you are going to prove their claims of that kind by some new and able exposition of the well known saying, *vox populi, vox Dei.*”

“ I am not, indeed, my Lord,” replied Charles, with a firm but respectful tone, and unembarrassed by the irony of his speech ; “ nor can your Lordship imagine, that I am going to claim for the sovereigns of this country, or of any other, a divine right similar to that of the Israelitish kings, the only monarchs upon earth who ever reigned by an indefeasible divine right. It cannot either be reasonably supposed, that I am unwilling to admit, that of all who wield the sceptre, none hold it by so fair and just a title, as those into whose hands it is lodged by the suffrages of the people. But then, if I am to give credit to the Mosaic history ;—if I am not

to reject the authentic monuments of the first ages, of which we Christians are possessed of, or the gospels of Heaven ;—all of which instruct me to believe, that government was coeval with mankind, in opposition to so many fine spun theories about the prior state of nature, I must view the act of the people in such a case, only as the means which Providence employed to place the new ruler upon his throne. The basis, therefore, of our government, is religion, as much as its end is liberty. But to express myself more distinctly, I will borrow the memorable words of Hoadley in his defence of Hooker, once the great object of Whig idolatry, and so justly styled the republican bishop. They are these, my Lord. “ All kings, but such as are immediately named by God himself, have their power by human right only ; though after human composition and agreement, their lawful choice is approved of God, and obedience required to them *by divine right.*” And Calvin, whom none will accuse of being a lover of monarchy, has expressly stated, in  
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various parts of his Institutes, that government, under every form is a divine ordinance. This, and this only then, is the divine right which I humbly conceive may be claimed for the first magistrate of this country, without its being open to the charge, of proving ruinous to himself, to the people, and to the constitution."

Here Mr. Featherweight, assuming an insolent tone of superiority, exclaimed, "Oh, Mr. Beauford, this sort of reasonings, believe me, are obviously calculated for other men, and other times than the present. You will hereafter discover, that they are more fitted for the cloister than for the world. They appear to me, nearly as ridiculous, I beg your pardon for saying so, as if the secretary of state of these days should refuse to employ spies, or to allow himself the liberty of opening letters, upon suspicion that they might contain matter of dangerous import, because he had read in Clarendon, that the *celebrated Lord Falkland* could not bring himself to do either of these things, when he held that office.

office. Take it from me, you must put aside this inflexibility and these sequestered speculations, if you ever hope to distinguish yourself as a political partizan."

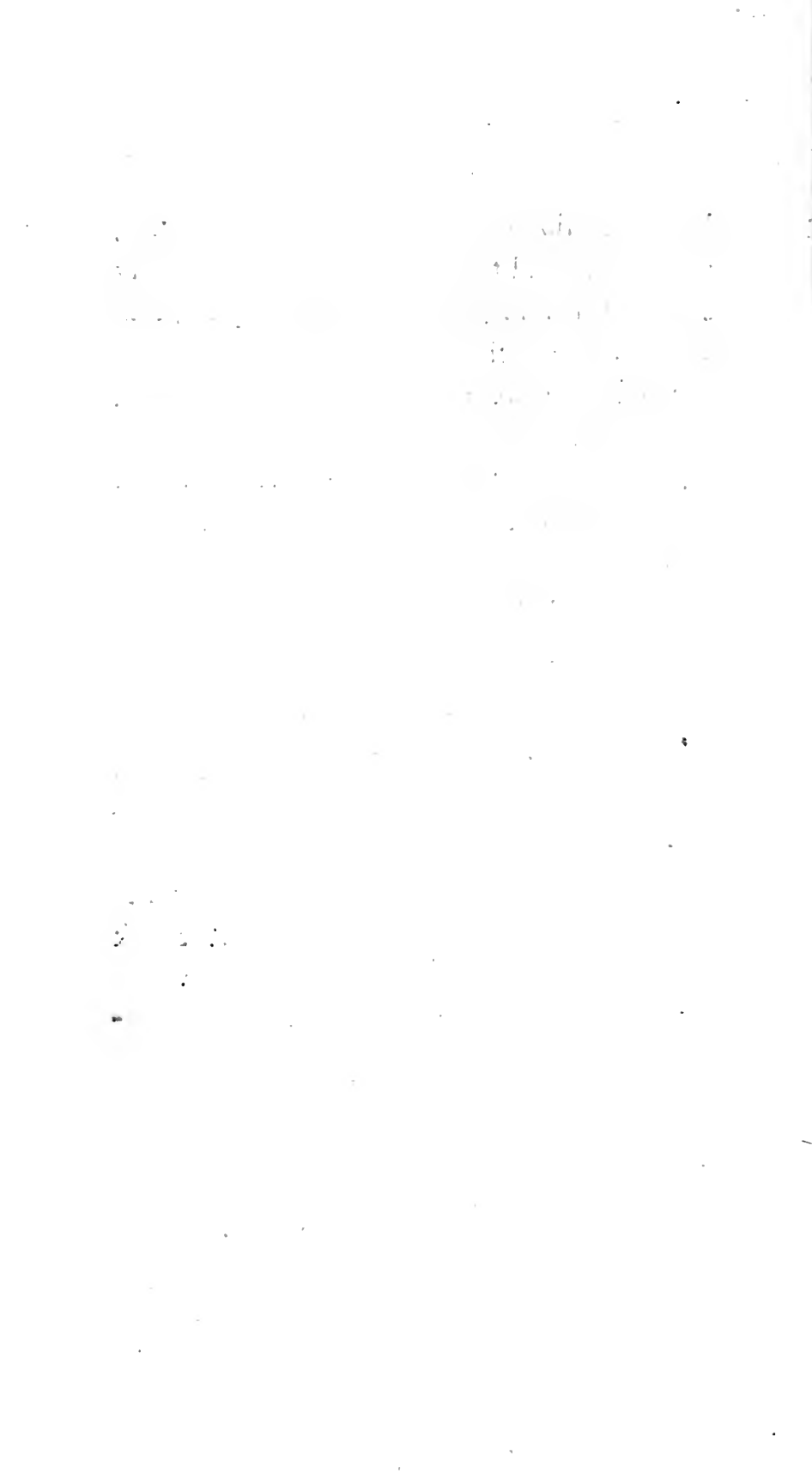
"I thank you for your counsel, Sir," replied Charles, "although it was unasked. And, give me leave in return to say, that the public hopes for any thing great, good, or virtuous, will never rest upon that man, who can servilely adopt in politics; Pope's maxim; *That whatever is, is right*; when it is there, as false, as it is just in Ethics. And though I have read and heard of men, who can win their way in the stormy sea of politics; as skillful mariners do on the ocean, by plying in all directions as occasions serve, and by making the best of all weathers; yet, I will venture to assert, that the most solid foundation for real and lasting political fame, is a spirit of moderation; and that the most contemptible of all transitions is, from the violence and intolerance of one extreme to another." In these observations Charles hit his Lordship so hard, though without the

least intention of doing so, that he reddened, and put an end to the discourse by abruptly saying, "It is high time, Sir Christopher, that we should join the ladies."

"It is indeed, my Lord," cried Oswald; when turning to Charles, he said in a low tone of voice, "You are a devilish clever fellow, Beauford, but if you wish me to be fond of your company, you will never talk politics or metaphysics; for *entre nous*, these are precisely the two things which I can't abide."

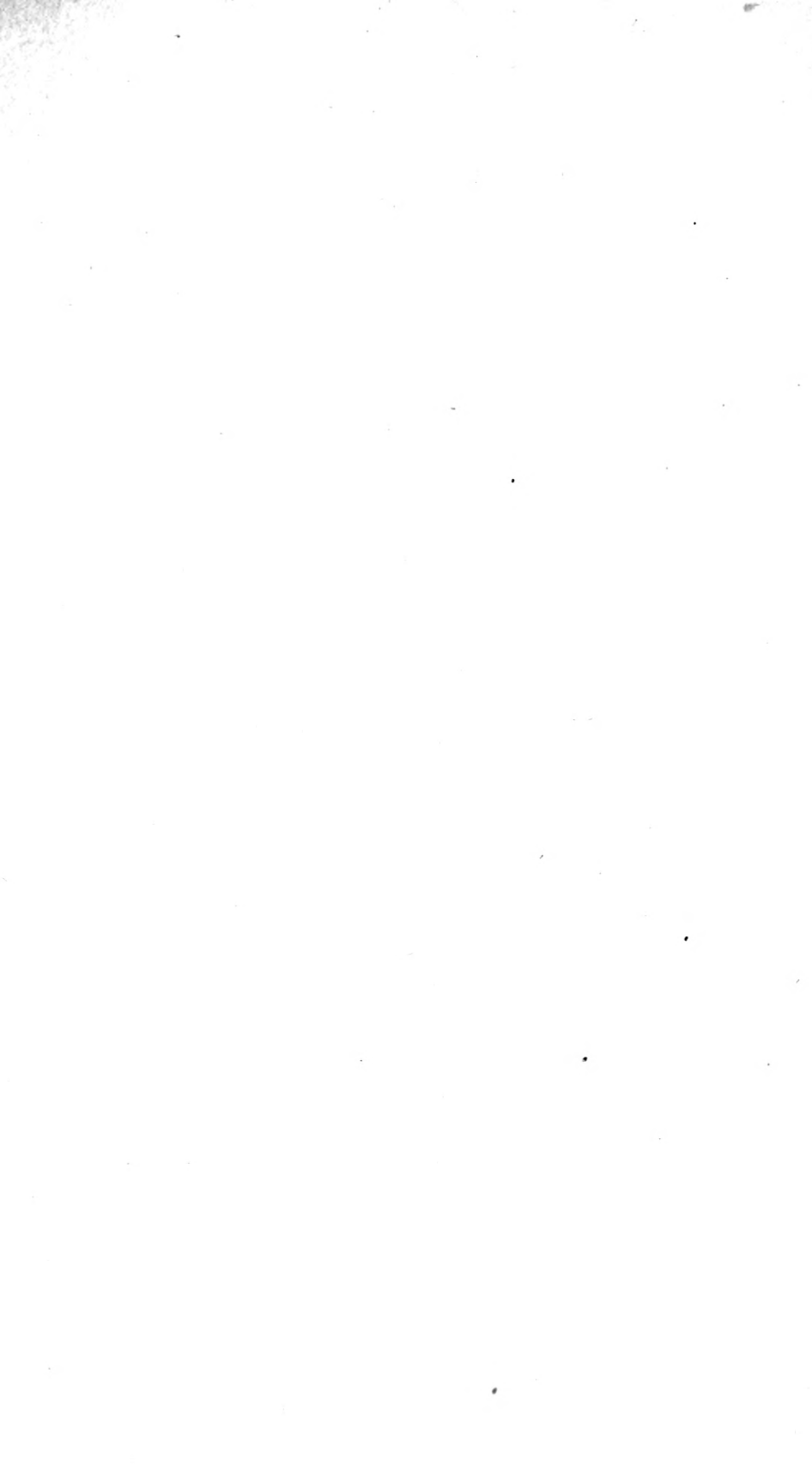
As soon as the Earl had taken his coffee, he rang for his carriage; and as he returned home ruminating on what was past, he resolved in his own mind to mould Charles's political principles entirely to his will, or else to get rid of one, who could not speak that language of accommodation which makes honor and interest pass for terms synonymous.

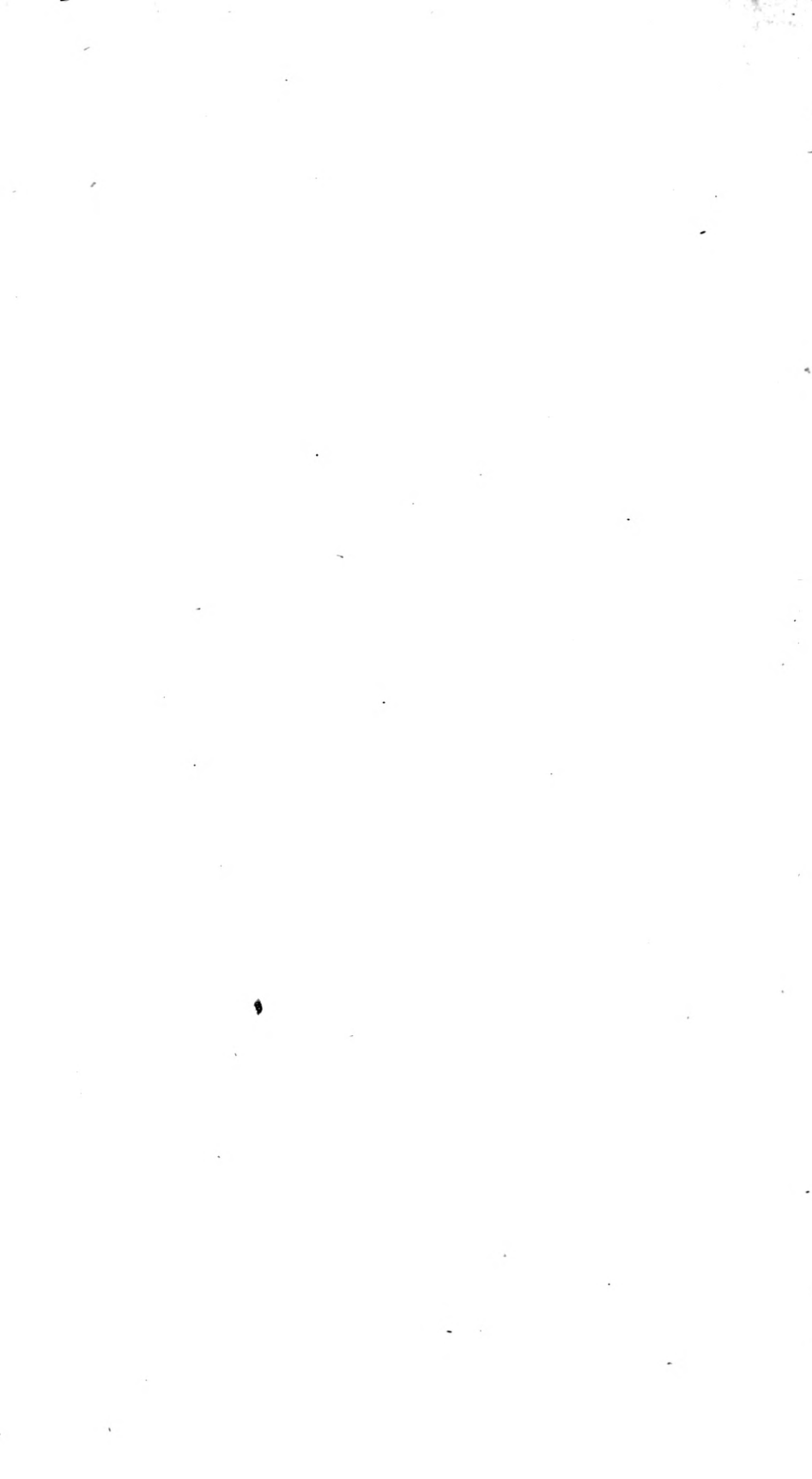
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